

# PAUL'S MISSIONARY TACTICS

FAITH AND THE LAW FOR JEWS, FOR GENTILES AND FOR A MIXED  
COMMUNITY

by

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MAY 1993

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and constitutes the results of my research in the subject.

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May 1993



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## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Title of Thesis PAUL'S MISSIONARY TACTICS: Faith and the Law for Jews, for Gentiles and for a Mixed Community  
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The main question of this thesis, how Paul employs various missionary tactics to meet different situations, is explained in Chapter One. The question stems from the debate on whether Paul has a coherent attitude to the law or not. The position adopted here is that Paul has various attitudes to the law and that these various attitudes are the tactical implications of a missionary strategy which is designed to meet different situations.

There are three missionary tactics. Chapter Two deals with Paul's first missionary tactic: Paul encourages Jews to observe the whole law, rather than to practise circumcision only. Paul provides a law-bound tactic as an option for Jews, because the law is often so important for Jews that, unless they are allowed to continue to obey the law, it will be very difficult for them to become Christians. Observance of the law, however, is considered only as a life-style appropriate to making the response of faith. What is essential for salvation is faith in Christ. This principle is valid for both Jews and Gentiles. Paul regards the law as optional, while his opponents regard it as essential. This is because Paul understands Jesus' death as ἱλαστήριον which has replaced, or fulfilled, all the functions of Jewish religion, including the law.

Chapter Three explains Paul's second missionary tactic: for Gentiles faith alone is essential. The law is not necessary for them to become members of God's people. Here Paul employs the Abraham story and claims that Abraham was reckoned as righteous by faith long before he was circumcised. Accordingly, he is a "man of faith". Therefore those who want to inherit blessings given through him must possess what Abraham has, that is, faith. Paul provides a law-free tactic for Gentiles, because Jewish law is too difficult for Gentiles to practise and because he realizes that uncircumcised Gentiles may experience the Spirit.

Chapter Four talks about Paul's last missionary tactic: when Paul faces a mixed community of Jews and Gentiles, he requires each individual to choose whatever he believes to be an appropriate way to respond to faith: Jewish Christians may respond to God's saving grace by observance of the law, while Gentile Christians may respond to the same grace in another way, a way freed from Jewish law and also freed from those things which are incompatible with faith. When the weak group in the community needs special care and support, however, Paul may ask Jews to abandon the law, or ask Gentiles to practise it. Paul is able to be so flexible, because he regards faith as the only condition of becoming a member of God's people, while he considers observance of the law as only one option in making the response of faith. In other words, faith is essential, while the law is optional.

The last chapter, Chapter Five, sums up the main arguments of the thesis and presents the main results of the research, that is: Paul teaches a "universal soteriology" which claims that faith in Christ is the common foundation for both Jews and Gentiles to become members of God's people. Based upon this foundation, various types of response, law-observing or non-observing, are allowed. Finally, the question of worshipping ancestors in Taiwan is taken as a test case in order to apply the main results to a local context.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- [1]. The abbreviations of Old Testament, New Testament and Apocrypha follow the list in the NRSV (Oxford: OUP 1989) p. ix and are printed in Roman.  
 [2]. Other abbreviations mainly follow *TDNT* 1: xvi-xl and are printed in italics. The names which do not occur frequently have been printed in full.  
 [3]. Biblical quotations are from the NRSV, except where otherwise stated. Greek quotations are from Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* 26th ed., 1979.

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| AB           | The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday)  |
| ABR          | <i>Australian Biblical Review</i>   |
| Ant.         | Josephus' <i>Jewish Antiquities</i> (trans. Whiston, W.)  |
| Ass. Mos.    | <i>Assumption of Moses (Testament of Moses)</i> ; trans. Priest, J., <i>cit. OTP</i> )  |
| Ap.          | <i>Flavius Josephus Against Apion</i> (trans. Whiston, W.)  |
| 2 Apoc. Bar. | 2 ( <i>Syriac Apocalypse of</i> ) <i>Baruch</i> (trans. Klijn, A.F.J., <i>cit. OTP</i> )  |
| b.           | <i>Babylonian Talmud</i>  |
| BAGD         | W. Bauer, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> , trans. & eds. W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich; 2nd ed. revised by F.W. Gingrich and F.W. Danker, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979. (translated from Bauer's <i>Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur</i> , Berlin: Verlag Alfred Töpelmann, 5th ed., 1958) |
| Bik.         | <i>Bikkurim</i>   |
| BNTC         | Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: A & C Black)  |
| CBC          | The Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge: CUP)   |
| CBQ          | <i>The Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>  |
| CUP          | Cambridge University Press  |
| ExT          | <i>The Expository Times</i>   |
| HTR          | <i>Harvard Theological Review</i>   |
| ICC          | The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament (Edinburgh: T & T Clark)  |
| IDB          | <i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> (4 vols., 1962, Supplementary volume 1976, Nashville: Abingdon)  |
| JAAR         | <i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>  |
| JBL          | <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>   |
| Jos.         | Josephus  |
| JSNT         | <i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>   |
| JSNTS        | Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series  |
| JTS          | <i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>   |
| JTS n.s.     | <i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> , new series  |
| Jub.         | <i>Jubilees</i> (trans. Wintermute, O.S., <i>cit. OTP</i> )   |
| LCL          | <i>The Loeb Classical Library</i> (Harvard)   |
| Legat.       | Philo <i>De Legatione ad Gaium</i> (trans. Colson, F.H., <i>cit. LCL</i> )  |
| LSJ          | H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , revised by H.S. Jones, Oxford: Clarendon, 9th ed. 1940, with supplement, 1968.  |
| m.           | <i>Mishnah</i>  |
| NCB          | The New Century Bible Commentary (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans)  |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| NEB        | The New English Bible (Oxford: OUP; Cambridge: CUP; 1972)  |
| NICNT      | The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans)  |
| NIGTC      | New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans)   |
| NJBC       | <i>The New Jerome Biblical Commentary</i> (2nd ed., Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1990)   |
| NRSV       | Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha (New York and Oxford: OUP, 1989)   |
| NTS        | <i>New Testament Studies</i>   |
| OTP        | J.H. Charlesworth ed., <i>The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> , 2 vols, New York and Garden City: Doubleday. (vol. 1: <i>Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments</i> , 1983; vol. 2: <i>Expansions of the "Old Testament" and Legends, Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms and Odes, Fragments of Lost Judeo-Hellenistic Works</i> , 1985) |
| OTL        | The Old Testament Library (London: SCM; Philadelphia: Westminster)   |
| OUP        | Oxford University Press  |
| para.      | paragraph  |
| Ps. Sol.   | <i>Psalms of Solomon</i> (trans. Wright, R.B., cit. OTP)   |
| Rab.       | <i>Rabbah</i> (following abbreviation for biblical book)   |
| REB        | The Revised English Bible (Oxford: OUP; Cambridge: CUP; 1989)  |
| SBLDS      | Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series (Missoula: The Society of Biblical Literature)  |
| Shab.      | <i>Shabbath</i>  |
| SJT        | <i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>  |
| SNTSMS     | Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series (Cambridge: CUP)  |
| Spec. Leg. | Philo <i>De Specialibus Legibus</i> (trans. Colson, F.H., cit. LCL)  |
| Str-B      | H. Strack and P. Billerbeck, <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament</i> (4 vols, Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung Oskar Beck, 1926-1928)   |
| TDNT       | G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds., <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , trans. Bromiley, G.W., 10 vols, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1964-1976. (= <i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> , Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1933-1979)  |
| TDOT       | <i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans)   |
| TPINTC     | TPI (Trinity Press International) New Testament Commentaries (London: SCM, Philadelphia: Trinity Press International)  |
| Wars       | Josephus <i>The Wars of the Jews</i> (trans. Whiston, W.)  |
| WBC        | Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word)  |
| WEC        | The Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary (Chicago: Moody)  |
| WUNT       | Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr)   |
| ZTK        | <i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>  |

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 THE MAIN ISSUE OF THIS THESIS

This thesis deals with the following concern: *how salvation is to be obtained in one's own culture*. It is here presupposed that salvation depends on God's initiative. The question, therefore, has to be asked more precisely: *how to respond to God's saving grace properly in order to receive salvation in one's own culture*. It is for this reason that the subject of Paul's missionary tactics on faith and the law has been selected, because the contextual application of his beliefs regarding faith and the law is a good example of a missionary policy which is based on cultural characteristics. The concentration in this thesis is on Pauline theology. The application of Pauline studies to a modern contemporary context has, for the present, been postponed. Accordingly, this thesis deals with the specific topic: *how Paul teaches his congregations, Jews and Gentiles, respectively and together, to respond to God's saving grace within their own cultural context*.

Paul preached in the first churches. At that time, the Christian movement was simply part of Judaism (cf. Watson 1986: 36-41; Hengel 1983b: 53; Betz 1979: 64; Dunn 1990: 237-239; e.g., Acts 3:1: Πέτρος δὲ καὶ Ἰωάννης ἀνέβαινον εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν ἐπὶ τὴν ὥραν τῆς προσευχῆς τὴν ἐνάτην). Paul was, therefore, preaching Jesus as Messiah in Judaism, or more precisely, in an environment dominated by Jewish law. Jewish Christians (and Paul was one of them) were well



able to combine faith in Christ and observance of the law in their daily life. That is to say, *they used to express their faith in Christ through observance of the law.*

When Gentiles began to join the churches, however, problems emerged. Did Gentiles have to follow the Jewish Christians and express their faith in Christ by practising Jewish law? To this question, most Jewish Christians would certainly answer, "Yes". Paul himself possibly agreed with this conviction, soon after he first encountered the risen Christ and became a Christian missionary. Later on, however, Paul had difficulty in bringing the Gentiles into the Christian community by law-bound tactics. As a result, he abandoned the requirement of the law, circumcision in particular, where Gentiles are concerned (see [3.2]).

Thus, Paul had to face the challenge and answer the question: What is the relationship between faith in Christ and observance of the law for Jews and for Gentiles respectively? In other words, Paul had to teach his congregations, Jews and Gentiles, about how to respond to God's saving grace in terms of their own culture. Since Paul and his congregations lived within the environment of Judaism and the Jewish law, or within an environment in which these played a part, the question can more precisely be put in this way: Did Jews and Gentiles respectively have to respond to God's saving grace with *or* without the law? It is, therefore, necessary to examine Paul's attitude to the law, in order to investigate Paul's teaching on both faith and the law.

## 1.2 *IS PAUL'S ATTITUDE TO THE LAW COHERENT?*

There is much discussion and debate as to whether Paul has a coherent attitude to the law, or not. Both Cranfield and Käsemann maintain that Paul's attitude to the law is consistent, while Räisänen opposes this suggestion.

Cranfield finds no contradiction in Paul's doctrine of the law. He maintains



that the gospel and the law are essentially one in Paul and that Paul uses the same term, νόμος, to denote both "legalism" and "law". What Paul opposes is, therefore, not the law itself, but rather "legalism", that is, the misunderstanding and misuse of the law. As a result, Cranfield suggests that we have to reckon carefully what is Paul's exact meaning in each case (cf. 1964: 43-68; 1979: 845-862).

Cranfield says:

"the Greek language used by Paul had no word-group to denote 'legalism', 'legalist', and 'legalistic' ... In view of this, we should ... be ready to reckon with the possibility that sometimes, when he appears to be disparaging the law, what he really has in mind may be not the law itself but the *misunderstanding* and *misuse* of it for which we have a convenient term" (1964: 55, my italics).

Next, Cranfield examines many polemical passages and interprets them according to his theory. For instance, (1) the meaning of νόμος in Rom. 6:14 (οὐ γάρ ἐστε ὑπὸ νόμον), 7:4 (καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐθανατώθητε τῷ νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ) and 7:6 (νυνὶ δὲ κατηγορήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου ἀποθανόντες ἐν ᾧ κατειχόμεθα) has the limited sense of "the law as condemning you", which is confirmed by 8:1 (Οὐδὲν ἄρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ); (2) the νόμος in Rom. 8:2 (... τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἁμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου) should be understood as the "power" exercised over us by sin and the resulting "power" over us of death; (3) in Gal. 4:3, 9, what Paul refers to is not the law itself, but rather the legalistic misunderstanding and misuse of it (cf. 1979: 853-861).

Käsemann, too, claims that Paul's attitude to the law is consistent, because he believes that Paul completely rejects the law. According to Käsemann, Paul regards gospel and law as a "mutually exclusive antithesis" (1980: 282). Therefore, only "the radical criticism of the Torah is the inalienable mark" of Paul's thought on the law (1980: 187). When Paul makes claims about the fulfilment of the law, Käsemann maintains, he is actually talking about the ethical portions of the Torah only (cf. 1980: 361f.).

In order to demonstrate that Paul consistently opposes the law, Käsemann has to interpret νόμος in some "difficult" passages differently (cf. Räisänen 1987: 66).

For example, (1) in the phrase, νόμος πίστεως (Rom. 3:27), νόμος means not "law", but rather "rule", "order", or "norm", because what faith has ended is the operation of the Torah and not just an opinion about the Torah (*cf.* Käsemann 1980: 103); (2) in νόμον ιστάνομεν (Rom. 3:31), νόμος is translated as the "will of God" (1980: 101); (3) the δικαίωμα in Rom. 8:4 (ἵνα τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθῇ ἐν ἡμῖν) is connected with Rom. 1:32 (τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ θεοῦ) and therefore, τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου in Rom. 8:4 is rendered as the "will of God" (1980: 217f.); (4) Rom. 13:8-10 is limited by taking the verses to mean a "transferring of legal obligations into the moral sphere" (1980: 360).

Räsänen, on the other hand, maintains that "Paul's thought on the law is full of difficulties and inconsistencies" (1987: 264). In the first four chapters of his book (1987), Räsänen supports his thesis by detailed analysis of many central passages of Paul's theology of the law. (1) Paul never defines νόμος clearly. Νόμος sometimes refers to the whole of Israel's sacred tradition, which is the decisive feature that separates Jews from Gentiles. The Gentiles, by definition, are not under the law (Rom. 2:12: ἄνομοι). The law is for Jews only (Rom. 2; 1 Cor. 9:20f.; Gal. 2:15). On the other hand, Paul seems to keep Gentiles in view when he talks about "the curse of the law" in Gal. 3:13f. and being "under the law" in Gal. 3:23ff. Räsänen, therefore, claims that Paul's view of the law is an oscillation between "the notion of a historical and particularist Torah and that of a general universal force" (*cf.* 1987: 16-41).

(2) Paul clearly claims that the whole law, not only the misunderstanding of the law, has been abolished (Gal. 3; Rom. 7; 2 Cor. 3). In Rom. 3:27 (διὰ νόμου πίστεως) and Rom. 8:2 (ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), Paul is talking about the actual abolition of the Torah. By contrast, Paul maintains that the law is still valid and therefore asks Christians to fulfil the whole law (Gal. 5:14; Rom. 13:8-10; Rom. 3:31; 8:4; *cf.* Räsänen 1987: 42-93).

(3) In Gal. 3:6ff. and Rom. 1:18-3:20, Paul regards total obedience to the law as sufficient, but impossible. In Rom. 2:14f., 26f., however, Paul claims that to

fulfil the law is possible and that even Gentiles can do that. In Phil. 3:6, Paul says that he himself is blameless in observance of the law. Räisänen concludes that only when Paul is dealing with the situation of Jews from a certain theological angle, does he maintain that it is impossible to fulfil the law (cf. 1987: 94-107).

(4) In his epistles apart from Galatians, Paul always regards the law as given by God (Rom. 7:22; 8:7; 9:4; 1 Cor. 9:8f.). In Gal. 3:19, however, Paul says: τί οὖν ὁ νόμος; τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη ... διαταγείς δι' ἀγγέλων ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου. Räisänen also indicates that Paul presents both the positive and the negative purposes of the law. In Gal. 3:19; Rom. 3:20; 5:20; 7:5, Paul connects the law with sin. In Rom. 3; 7:10; 8:3, on the other hand, Paul insists that the law brings life (cf. 1987: 128-161).

Räisänen, finally, concludes that "contradictions and tensions have to be *accepted* as *constant* features of Paul's theology of the law. They are not simply of an accidental or peripheral nature" (1987: 11, his italics). Räisänen also suggests that Paul's inconsistent attitude to the law stems from a theological dilemma: as a Jew, a former Pharisee, Paul believes that the law is given by God and therefore is holy; but as a Christian, an apostle to the Gentiles, he is convinced that the law has been abolished by Christ's death and resurrection. Räisänen maintains: "We find Paul struggling with the problem that a *divine* institution has been *abolished* through what God has done in Christ" (1987: 264f., his italics).

There is probably some truth in the view that Paul's attitude to the law is not *verbally* consistent. Barclay, for instance, outlines the main contradictions in Paul's statements on the law as follows: (1) Sometimes νόμος refers to the Mosaic Torah (Rom. 2:17; 1 Cor. 9:9; Gal. 3:17), but sometimes it seems to have the generalized sense of "rule" or "principle" (Rom. 3:27?; 7:21; 8:2?). (2) On many occasions, Paul declares that Christians have died to the law and therefore are free from it (Rom. 6:14; 7:1-6; Gal. 2:19; 5:1), while in some cases, he claims that they uphold and fulfil the law (Rom. 3:31; 8:4; 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14). (3) In several passages, Paul sets up an antithesis between the law and faith in Christ (Rom. 2-4; 2 Cor. 3;

Gal. 3-4), but on one occasion, he connects νόμος with faith (Rom. 3:27: νόμος πίστεως) and on two occasions he alludes to νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21). (4) It is unclear whether the τέλος in Rom. 10:4 is to be understood as "end", "termination", or as "goal", "fulfilment". (5) How can Paul insist that there is no justification by works of the law on the one hand (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16; 5:4) and yet teach judgment by works on the other (Rom. 2:1-16; 2 Cor. 5:10; Gal. 6:4-8)? (6) When Paul maintains that it is impossible to be justified by works of the law, is it because nobody can keep the law (Rom. 3:9-23; 7:7-25; Gal. 3:10), or because even keeping the law would not be the proper path to justification (Gal. 3:11f., 21; Phil. 3:2-11). (7) Most fundamentally of all, if the law is holy as Paul claims in Rom. 7:10-14; 9:4, how can he connect it with sin, curse and death in Rom. 7:5; 2 Cor. 3:6-9; Gal. 3:10-13 and how can he play down its significance and regard it as διαταγὰς δι' ἀγγέλων ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου in Gal. 3:19 (cf. Barclay 1986: 5)?

In addition to Barclay's suggestions, there are further examples: (1) on circumcision, Paul says, on the one hand, περιτομὴ μὲν ... ὠφελεῖ ἐὰν νόμον πράσσης (Rom. 2:25), but claims that ἐὰν περιτέμνησθε, Χριστὸς ὑμᾶς οὐδὲν ὠφελήσει (Gal. 5:2) on the other; (2) on the food laws, Paul asks Gentiles to practise the food laws (Rom. 14:21: καλὸν τὸ μὴ φαγεῖν κρέα μηδὲ πιεῖν οἶνον ...), while he also maintains that οὐδὲν κοινὸν δι' ἑαυτοῦ (Rom. 14:14) and encourages the Corinthians πᾶν τὸ παρατιθέμενον ὑμῖν ἐσθίετε (1 Cor. 10:27).

### 1.3 DIFFICULTIES IN UNDERSTANDING PAUL

These verbal contradictions emerge, perhaps because Paul was a *missionary* rather than a *theologian*. He was not a theologian who sat down in the library,

carefully constructed a well-organized doctrine and then produced a theologically consistent work relevant to everyone. Paul was rather a missionary who walked around the synagogues in the Diaspora preaching the gospel and debating with his opponents. He was happy to talk about what he knew well, *e.g.*, God's liberating grace in Jesus' death and resurrection. Unfortunately, sometimes, or even on most occasions, he had to answer questions which he did not like, or even did not really understand, *e.g.*, Why did God give the law and then send his son? Paul had to reply to his opponents' challenge before he had worked out an established doctrine. His thought was, therefore, in the *process* of being developed during his mission. Consequently, it is difficult for Paul to offer a coherent doctrine about the law in his epistles.

As regards the question, why Paul's thought is not verbally consistent, Räisänen, Sanders and Hübner all attempt to solve this problem. Räisänen claims that Paul's argument runs "backwards", with the Christ event, not the law, as the starting point (*cf.* 1987: 201). He says:

"The Christ event stands out as a liberating event of supreme importance, an event with universal implications, bringing freedom and peace to everyone willing to accept the message. At this point Paul is perfectly coherent. But when it comes to the description of *what men were liberated from*, the picture becomes more or less confused" (Räisänen 1987: 23, his italics).

Holding this conviction, Paul in practice abandoned the law for all missionary purposes. His opponents, however, disagreed with his missionary tactics and challenged him on this point. Paul had to reply to their challenge by means of theological argument. In terms of theology, however, he still struggled with the dilemma of the relationship between the law and Christ: God had given the law, why did he also send his son (*cf.* Räisänen 1987: 264f.)? Paul, therefore, had no choice but to go on and "rationalize" his practice (*cf.* 1987: 201). This is why Paul's attitude to the law was so confused: he had to answer his opponents when he had not yet formed an established conviction. Finally, Räisänen suggests:

"Paul's theology of the law can only be understood if the tensions and self-contradictions in it are taken seriously. The tensions are to be

acknowledged; they should be accepted as clues to Paul's internal problems" (1987: 83).

Sanders also points out that Paul's thought runs "backwards":

"He (sc. Paul) thought 'backwards' from the revealed solution - that God sent Christ to save the world - to the plight from which he saved it - that all things were 'under Sin'. He thought that God controlled the world and history as a whole; he saw him especially at work in some particular events. Looking back through the lens of the appearance of Christ to him, Paul saw everything as leading up to that event, and the rest of history as being determined by it. The revelation drove Paul to preach to the Gentiles, and so he thought that God had always planned to save the Gentiles by faith in his Son. Looking back, Paul saw the election of Abraham himself as pointing towards the inclusion of the Gentiles ... But since God, in Paul's new insight, had sent Christ to save the world, both everybody and everything, it was necessary to conclude that he had not previously provided for its salvation. Thus the lead-up to universal salvation was negative: the world previously must have been condemned, and whatever preceded Christ must have served to put it in that condition" (1991: 41; cf. 1977: 443).

Sanders, however, does not consider that this kind of thinking leads Paul's argument into inconsistencies and self-contradictions, but suggests that this thinking enables Paul to give the law a negative description coherently (cf. 1977: 442f., 475, 484; 1991: 42, 99f.). What Sanders regards as the difficulty for understanding Paul's statements about the law is that it is not easy to distinguish "the *reason* for which he held a view and the *arguments* which he adduces in favor of it" (1983: 4, my italics). Sanders, therefore, suggests that we have to distinguish carefully between "the center of his (sc. Paul's) thought" (or Paul's "primary convictions") and "the most telling terminology by which he expresses the transfer from the old life to the new" (1983: 5f.). Paul's central convictions are, according to Sanders, (1) that God has sent Jesus to provide salvation for all; (2) that salvation is, therefore, available for all, including Jews and Gentiles, on the same basis (i.e., "faith in Christ" and "dying with Christ"); (3) that the Lord would soon return; (4) that Paul was called by God as the apostle to the Gentiles; (5) that Christians should live according to God's will (cf. 1983: 5).

Hübner, on the other hand, suggests that there is a process of development in Paul's thought as regards the law from Galatians to Romans. He says that "between the time when Galatians was written and the writing of Romans, there lies a far



from trivial *process* of reflection and *development* in Paul the theologian" (1984: 54, my italics). The basic difference, according to Hübner, is that the law has been abolished in Galatians, while in Romans, Christ is only regarded as the end of "the carnal misuse of the Law" (1984: 148f.). Räisänen criticizes Hübner's suggestion by claiming that "the notion of a dramatic theological development within a very short period of time in the thinking of one already engaged in missionary work for some twenty years is strange enough" (Räisänen 1987: 8). Räisänen, then, says:

"This is not at all to deny that Paul's thought underwent a development during his missionary activity. On the contrary ... I am sure it did. But I do not detect any straightforward development from any one extant letter to another. Had we some writings of Paul from, say, the thirties, the situation might be different. Whatever development there was in Paul's theology of the law, must ... have taken place by the time of the Antiochian episode referred to in Gal 2.11ff." (1987: 9f.).

Räisänen is possibly right. Paul's thought about the law is in process, but not a straightforward development from one letter to another. Paul seems to begin his Gentile mission with his encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus and to begin his campaign on "justification by faith, not by the law" with the Antioch episode. Contrary to Räisänen, however, Paul's thought was probably in process all the time, even after the Antioch episode. He perhaps never had a fully established doctrine, because Paul was a *living* man whose thought certainly changed from time to time and from situation to situation. Accordingly, it is difficult to expect a coherent doctrine of the law in Paul.

Another difficulty in understanding Paul is that all we have of his works are his "letters". Paul wrote letters to his congregations in the first century, rather than to us today. His letters were designed to answer specific questions raised by *certain* churches and *particular* opponents, not to provide a "systematic theology" in order to answer our every question. Moreover, there is a lot of common knowledge and many presuppositions missing from his letters. They were shared by Paul and his audience, but they are unknown to us (*cf.* Betz 1979: 268). It is, therefore, very difficult to understand Paul completely by means of these "uncompleted" letters.

It is, therefore, fair to conclude that Paul's statements about the law are not as consistent as Cranfield and Käsemann maintain. But they are also not so completely confused as Räisänen claims. Paul is more like what Sanders suggests: he is coherent, but not systematic. Sanders claims that Paul is not a "systematic theologian", but rather a "coherent thinker" (1977: 433, 518). Paul was a "thinker", because "he tried to work out solutions to problems by re-thinking the Christian tradition" (1977: 518). Paul has a coherent conviction which is based on an "exclusivist soteriology: salvation is only in Christ and appropriated only by faith" (1977: 519). Paul is answering questions raised on different occasions by means of this coherent conviction. Therefore, he is coherent.

Paul's arguments, however, are not systematic, since he has to express his conviction in different circumstances: he is making "varying attempts to solve the same problem" (Sanders 1983: 145). Sanders indicates that Paul's lack of systematic thinking about the law is principally apparent in two topics: (1) Paul connects the law with sin, because he believes that "God gave the law and that salvation is by faith in Christ for all" (1983: 144). (2) Regarding Christian behaviour, Paul "makes no distinction between the law which does not righteous and to which Christians have died and the law which those in the Spirit fulfill" (1983: 145).

Beker also maintains that Paul provides various arguments on the law which are based on a coherent theological centre. He presents a "coherence-contingency" scheme to interpret Paul's theology. He argues that Paul's thought contains a coherent centre which is located on a subtextual level. This centre is "the truth of the gospel" (Gal. 2:5, 14), namely the apocalyptic interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Christ. In other words, Paul interprets Jesus' death and resurrection from the point of view of eschatology. This apocalypticism, in Beker's opinion, comes from Paul's experience of the Christophany on the Damascus road. Beker also recognizes that there are some varying views within Paul's epistles. This is because Paul faces particularity and variety within the sociological, economic and psychological situations of his churches on the mission field. Paul uses various



arguments and symbols to meet every specific contingency. These symbols include "justification" and "righteousness of God". Finally, Beker suggests an "interaction" theory to keep the balance between coherence and contingency. This theory focuses on the question of how the abiding word of the gospel can become a word on target, *i.e.*, how the message of the gospel should properly be articulated in various human situations (*cf.* 1980: 243; 1988: 364-377; 1989: 352-365).

Paul is coherent, but not systematic. Or, more precisely, Paul is not verbally consistent, but also not completely confused. It is, therefore, difficult to provide a theory to interpret *all* Paul's arguments. To draw a picture in order to explain *most* of Paul's thought, however, does seem to be possible. The main task of this thesis is, therefore, an attempt to draw a sketch of how, on most occasions, Paul has different attitudes to the law, and to describe both those situations in which he opposes the law and those in which he does not.

#### 1.4 THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ARGUMENT

The argument begins by the disagreeing with Sanders' and Dunn's suggestions regarding the question: on *what* occasion does Paul reject the law? Sanders claims that Paul rejects the law only for "getting in", not for "staying in". Dunn maintains that what Paul opposes is the "works of the law" with its social function. The position adopted here is, however, that Paul rejects the law *only* when his opponents attempt to impose observance of the law on Gentile believers.

##### Sanders' Position

Sanders claims that Paul opposes the law, whenever living by the law is regarded as the essential condition of entry into the community of God's people.

He does so on the grounds that God intends to admit both Jew and Gentile on the same basis, namely by faith in Christ (*cf.* 1983: 46-48). Otherwise, the law is still valid for "staying in", *i.e.*, it is still valid to reveal God's will, including correct behaviour (*cf.* 1991: 90). Christians, therefore, should fulfil the law. Sanders concludes that "when Paul opposed 'faith' to 'law', the question was what is required to be a member of the group that would be saved", but that "when the topic was how people in that group should behave, he saw no opposition between faith and law" (1983: 114). In other words, the law is not valid for "getting in", but is still significant for "staying in". Sanders' statement very likely stems from his comparison of Judaism with Paul's theology. He says:

"In Judaism ... commitment to the covenant puts one 'in', while obedience ... subsequently keeps one in. In Paul's usage, 'be made righteous' ('be justified') is a term indicating getting in, not staying in the body of the saved. Thus when Paul says that one cannot be made righteous by works of law, he means that one cannot, by works of law, 'transfer to the body of the saved'. When Judaism said that one is righteous who obeys the law, the meaning is that one thereby stays in the covenant" (1977: 544).

In short, Sanders claims that Paul opposes the law when he is talking about the condition of "getting in", but he does not reject the law as guidance for "staying in".

Sanders is right to indicate that, for Paul, the only condition of entering into the community of God's people is faith, rather than observance of the law. Regarding the requirement of "staying in" the community of God's people, however, Paul does not consider the law is valid for all. Paul, in fact, claims that the law is valid for "staying in" for Jews only. He still rejects the imposition on Gentiles of the law, food laws and the sabbath in particular, even for the purpose of "staying in".

In other words, there are four occasions under discussion: (1) how *Jews* can get into the community of God's people, (2) how *Gentiles* can get into, (3) how *Jews* can stay in and (4) how *Gentiles* can stay in. Sanders' argument is that Paul rejects the law on occasions 1 and 2, but that he does not oppose the law on

occasions 3 and 4. The position adopted here is that Paul opposes the law on occasions 1, 2 and 4, and that only on occasion 3 does he not reject the law. The difference is occasion 4, the question of how *Gentiles* can *stay in* the community of God's people. Sanders suggests that Paul considers that the law *is* valid on occasion 4. Paul, however, insists that the law is *not* valid on occasion 4, that is, he rejects the imposition on Gentiles of the observance of the law, circumcision, food laws and the sabbath in particular, on every occasion which includes "staying in" (see [3.1.1] and [4.1.1]).

Moreover, Sanders himself also maintains that Paul opposes circumcision, food laws and the sabbath in particular (*cf.* 1983: 114; 1991: 90). Circumcision is a rite for "getting in", but food laws and the sabbath are laws for "staying in". Sanders' argument, which is based upon the distinction between "getting in" and "staying in", is, therefore, defective.

#### Dunn's Position

Dunn maintains that what Paul rejects is not the law in general, but rather the "works of the law", circumcision, food laws and the sabbath (*cf.* 1990f: 191-194), with their "social function" as constituting the identity and boundary markers of Jewish self-understanding. Apart from this, the law "can continue to serve in a positive role" (1990d: 224), *e.g.*, to give "covenant people a way of dealing with sin in the period of time prior to the coming of Christ" (1990e: 250).

Dunn claims that Paul understands "works of the law" not as "good works" which mean earning God's favour by observing the law, but rather as "covenant works, works related to the covenant, works done in obedience to the law of the covenant" (*cf.* 1990f: 191). Dunn defines "works of the law" as:

"those regulations prescribed by the law which any good Jew would simply take for granted to describe what a good Jew did. To be a Jew was to be a member of the covenant, was to observe circumcision, food laws and sabbath" (1990f: 194).

Dunn, then, explains the "social function" of the "works of the law" as that which identifies Israel as the chosen people of the covenant and as a boundary which marks them off as distinct from the other nations, especially from Hellenism which has threatened Jewish national distinction (*cf.* 1990d: 223, 231; 1990e: 242f.). This "social function" became more and more important when Judaism was under the threat of Syrian assimilation since the second century B.C. Dunn asserts that, from a "social anthropological perspective", members of a group "will tend naturally to think of the group and of their membership of the group in terms of these (*sc.* identifying) features and characteristics, including any distinctive practices and beliefs" (1990d: 216). As a result, Dunn says:

"the particular regulations of circumcision and food laws were important not in themselves, but because they *focused* Israel's distinctiveness, made visible Israel's claims to be a people set apart, were the clearest points which differentiated the Jews from the nations. The law was part and parcel of Israel's identity, both as a nation and as a religion" (1990d: 218f., *his italics*).

These identity markers are considered by Jews as the "badges" of covenantal membership which mark out the Jews as God's people.

Finally, Dunn maintains that it is the demand for the "works of the law" as the necessary expression of faith which Paul denies (*cf.* 1990f: 198), because "works of the law" with their social function is "a too narrowly nationalistic and racial conception of the covenant" (1990f: 201f.). Dunn says:

"when Paul denied the possibility of 'being justified by works of the law' it is precisely this basic Jewish self-understanding which Paul is attacking - the idea that God's acknowledgement of covenant status is bound up with, even dependent upon, observance of these particular regulations - the idea that God's verdict of acquittal hangs to any extent on the individual's having declared his membership of the covenant people by embracing these distinctively Jewish rites" (1990f: 194).

In other words, what Paul is attacking is "a particular attitude to the law as such, the law as a whole in its social function as distinguishing Jew from Gentile" (1990d: 224).

Dunn sums up his argument regarding the "works of the law" with their social function as follows:

"the phrase τὰ ἔργα τοῦ νόμου belongs to a complex of ideas in which the social function of the law is prominent. The law serves both to identify Israel as the people of the covenant and to mark them off as distinct from the (other) nations. 'Works of the law' denote all that the law requires of the devout Jew, but precisely because it is the law as identity and boundary marker which is in view, the law as Israel's law focuses on these rites which express Jewish distinctiveness most clearly ... 'works of the law' refer not exclusively but particularly to those requirements which bring to sharp focus the distinctiveness of Israel's identity. It is because they have such a crucial role in defining 'Jewishness', membership of the covenant people, that circumcision and food laws feature so prominently in discussion of works of the law and righteousness" (Dunn 1990d: 223; cf. Sanders 1983: 46, 102, 114; *idem* 1991: 90; Räisänen 1987: 171f.).

Dunn's argument, what Paul rejects is the "works of the law" with their social function, however, makes it difficult to explain some of Paul's positive attitudes to circumcision, food laws and the sabbath: (1) regarding circumcision, Paul does not reject circumcision in Gal. 5:6; 6:15; Rom. 2:25 and 1 Cor. 7:17-19; (2) as regards food laws, Paul asks the Romans to practise food laws (Rom. 14:21: "It is good not to eat meat or drink wine ..."); (3) with regard to the sabbath, Paul accepts those who observe the sabbath (Rom. 14:6: "Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord") and, moreover, (4) Paul encourages Jews to obey the whole law, including circumcision, food laws and the sabbath (see [2.1]). Most strikingly, Dunn himself, in his commentary on Rom. 4:12 (καὶ πατέρα περιτομῆς τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς στοιχοῦσιν τοῖς ἰχνεσιν τῆς ἐν ἁκροβυστίᾳ πίστεως τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ), claims:

"The use of οὐ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ, rather than οὐ(κ), ἀλλὰ is significant. Paul does not deny or wholly set aside Abraham's fatherhood of the Jewish people as such ... Nor does he say 'not circumcision,' but 'not only circumcision'; *he accepts circumcision's continuing role as a mark of the Jewish people*" (1988: 211, my italics).

That is to say, Dunn still recognizes that Paul does not reject circumcision when he has Jews in mind. It is, therefore, fair to conclude that Paul does not reject the "works of the law" all the time. He does not prohibit Jews from practising the "works of the law", even though circumcision, for example, continuously functions as a mark of Jewish self-identity (see [2.1]). What Paul rejects is only the imposing on Gentiles of the "works of the law".

Recalling the four occasions discussed above: (1) how Jews get in, (2) how Gentiles get in, (3) how Jews stay in and (4) how Gentiles stay in, Dunn argues that Paul rejects the "works of the law" on all four occasions. But, in fact, Paul does not reject the "works of the law" on occasion 3, he does not prohibit Jews from responding to God's saving grace by practising "works of the law", even if the "works of the law" still function as the badges of Jewish self-identity.

#### The Positions Adopted in This Thesis

The best way to answer the question, on what occasion, or occasions, Paul rejects the law, is not to set an anthesis between "getting in" and "staying in" as Sanders suggests, nor to classify what Paul rejects as the "works of the law" as Dunn argues. The best way to answer this question is to take into account Paul's different missionary situations. Paul was preaching the gospel to different *audiences* with different *questions*. Consequently, the audience and the questions are the most important elements in leading him to make his decision to reject the law, to adopt the law, or to regard the law as optional. There are two groups in his audience: *Jews* and *Gentiles*. There are two questions: how to *get into* the community of God's people and how to *stay in* it. Putting these together, four occasions arise: (1) how *Jews* can *get in*, (2) how *Gentiles* can *get in*, (3) how *Jews* can *stay in* and (4) how *Gentiles* can *stay in*. Sanders' suggestion is that Paul rejects the law on occasions 1 and 2. Dunn's argument is that Paul opposes the "works of the law" with its social function on all four occasions. The position adopted here is that Paul rejects the law, or the "works of the law", on occasions 1, 2 and 4, but not on occasion 3.

All, Sanders, Dunn and the position adopted here, agree that Paul rejects the law on occasions 1 and 2. The difference is occasions 3 and 4. Sanders claims that Paul does *not* reject the law on occasions 3 and 4, while Dunn maintains that Paul *does* reject the law on occasions 3 and 4. The position adopted here,

however, is that Paul does *not* reject the law on occasion 3, for he does not prohibit Jews from obeying the law in response to God's saving grace (see [2.1]); and that he *does* reject the law on occasion 4, for he *does* reject the imposition upon Gentiles of the observance of the law, circumcision, food laws and the sabbath in particular (see [3.1] and [4.1]).

The thesis, therefore, argues that Paul has different attitudes to the law which are designed to meet different situations. There are three missionary tactics on the law. First, Paul encourages *Jews* to continue to obey the whole law, including circumcision, food laws and the sabbath. This will be explained in Chapter Two. In Chapter Three, the topic under discussion is Paul's second missionary tactic, Paul's emphasis that the law is not necessary for *Gentiles* to become members of God's people. Lastly, in the Fourth Chapter, it will be argued that when Paul meets a *mixed* community of Jews *and* Gentiles, he allows them to make up their own mind, but asks them not to impose their own convictions on one another.

All these missionary tactics on the law, however, only deal with the question of how to "stay in" the community of God's people, that is, how to respond to God's saving grace in Jesus' death and resurrection. They have nothing to do with the question of how to "get into" the community of God's people. On this question, Paul consistently claims that faith in Christ is the only condition (on this too Sanders and Dunn agree). Paul's strategy on faith is, therefore, coherent.

In short, Paul has one missionary strategy on faith and three missionary tactics on the law. Paul's strategy on faith is unique and coherent, while his attitudes to the law vary in relation to the different audience addressed. Paul consistently emphasizes that faith is essential for both Jews and Gentiles in order to "get into" the community of God's people. His attitudes to the law, however, are various and are designed for three different groups of audience: Jews, Gentiles and a mixed community of Jews and Gentiles. The purpose is to offer appropriate guidance for different people, so that they may respond properly in different ways to God's saving grace, that is, they may "stay in" the community of God's people.



## CHAPTER TWO

### PAUL'S MISSIONARY TACTICS (1):

#### FOR THE JEWS

Paul describes himself as an "apostle to the Gentiles" (ἐθνῶν ἀπόστολος, Rom. 11:13; cf. Rom. 1:5f.; 15:16-18; Gal. 1:16; 2:7). This statement has raised the question: Did Paul ever preach to the Jews? Responding to this question, Sanders and O'Neill claim that Paul never preached to Jews but to Gentiles only. Watson, on the other hand, suggests that there were two stages in Paul's mission. He preached first to Jews and then to Gentiles.<sup>1</sup>

It is, however, more likely that Paul preached to Jews throughout his career although his audience consisted mainly of Gentiles. Paul shows his strong concern about the fate of his fellow Jews in Rom. 9-11 (e.g., 9:2f.: ὅτι λύπη μοί ἐστὶν μεγάλη καὶ ἀδιάλειπτος ὀδύνη τῇ καρδίᾳ μου. πύχόμην γὰρ ἀνάθεμα εἶναι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου τῶν συγγενῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα). Also he demonstrates his desire to win his fellow Jews in 1 Cor. 9:20 (ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαίους, ἵνα Ἰουδαίους κερδήσω). It is, therefore, very likely that Paul preached the gospel to Jews throughout his mission: from the beginning right through to the later stages. But because most Jews rejected the gospel, Paul's converts were, as a result, mainly Gentiles. Thus, when he wrote letters in the last years of his mission, he could *confess* that he was an "apostle to the Gentiles".



Moreover, most congregations that Paul met with were mixed communities, composed of both Jews and Gentiles (e.g., Gal. 2:11-14; Rom. 14:1-15:13). It was, therefore, necessary for Paul to make clear in his letters his attitude to the law, not only to Gentiles, but also to Jews. This suggestion is well confirmed by Paul's saying in 1 Cor. 9:22b-23: τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα, ἵνα πάντως τινὰς σώσω. πάντα δὲ ποιῶ διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, ἵνα συγκοινωνὸς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι.

There are two sections in this chapter: (1) what are Paul's missionary tactics regarding the *law* where Jews are concerned and why; (2) what is Paul's teaching regarding *faith* where the Jews are concerned and why.

## Paul's Missionary Tactics Regarding the Law

Paul explains his missionary tactics regarding the law for the Jews very fully in Rom. 2.<sup>2</sup> There, he criticises his opponents because they observe circumcision *only* and ignore the rest of the law. Consequently, he encourages Jews to observe the whole law - *both* circumcision *and* the rest of the law. In order to demonstrate that these tactics are Paul's usual policy, Gal. 6:13, 1 Cor. 7:19 and 9:20 are added into the discussion.

### 2.1.1 Accusation of the Jews

Paul seems never to prohibit Jews from observance of the law. In Rom. 11:20 (καλῶς· τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ ἐξεκλάσθησαν, οὐ δὲ τῇ πίστει ἔστηκας· μὴ ὑψηλὰ φρόνει ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ), what Paul regards as a Jewish failing is not observance of the law, but rather their ἀπιστία. As a result, instead of asking Jews to abandon the law, Paul says in 11:23: ἐὰν μὴ ἐπιμένωσιν τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ, ἐγκεντρισθήσονται. In Gal. 2:7-9, Paul recognizes Peter's law-bound tactic to the Jews as one of God's saving actions.<sup>3</sup> It is, therefore, fair to conclude that Paul *does not prohibit Jews from observing the law*, but on the contrary, maintains that allowing Jews to practise the law is in accordance with God's saving plan.

In this section, a further topic, Paul in fact accused Jews of their transgression of the law, is argued. The evidence is taken from Gal. 6:13 and Rom. 2:1-24.

## Galatians 6:13

From the point of view of rhetorical criticism, Betz indicates that Gal. 6:11-18 serves as the *peroratio* or *conclusio*, the end or conclusion, of the letter (cf. 1979: 313). The *peroratio* gives Paul the last chance of reminding his audience of the main points of the letter and of making a "strong emotional impression" upon them (*ibid.*).<sup>4</sup> In this passage, therefore, Paul delivers a sharp attack which combines "objective facts" with "subjective judgments" against his opponents (cf. Betz 1979: 314). Longenecker disagrees with Betz's argument, but he does also maintain that the function of Gal. 6:11-18 is "to highlight and summarize the main points" that have been dealt with in the body of the letter (cf. 1990: 287).

Paul strongly attacks his opponents in 6:12f.:

Ὅσοι θέλουσιν εὐπροσωπῆσαι ἐν σαρκί, οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, μόνον ἵνα τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ διώκωνται. οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι αὐτοὶ νόμον φυλάσσουσιν ἀλλὰ θέλουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, ἵνα ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ σαρκὶ καυχῶνται.

Three questions have arisen from this passage. (1) Who are Paul's opponents - οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι? (2) Why do Paul's opponents try to compel his audience to be circumcised? In other words, what is the persecution which stems from the preaching of the cross of Christ? (3) What does Paul mean by saying οὐδὲ οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι αὐτοὶ νόμον φυλάσσουσιν?

The identification of οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι depends on whether this phrase is regarded as passive or middle. If a middle voice is taken, then οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι is understood as "those who receive circumcision", referring to those Gentile Christians who have accepted the practice of Jewish law, particularly circumcision (cf. Munck 1959: 87-89; Schoeps 1961: 65).<sup>5</sup> According to the overall context of Galatians, however, it is more likely that οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι refers to certain Judaizing Jews (cf. Betz 1979: 316; Longenecker 1990: 292). Burton rightly claims that the ἐὰν περιτέμνησθε in 5:2 (ἐὰν περιτέμνησθε, Χριστὸς ὑμᾶς

οὐδὲν ὠφελήσει) indicates "a future possibility" which reflects the fact that "the question whether they will be circumcised is still *pending*" (1921: 273, my italics). The situation, therefore, was probably uncertain. Judaizers had been urging the Galatians to accept circumcision in order that they might become sons of Abraham and so share the Jews' blessings, but the Galatians had not yet done so (cf. Burton 1921: 274, 353). That is to say, the Gentile Christians in Galatia were going to accept the Judaizers' persuasion and to be circumcised. It is, therefore, fair to suggest that those Judaizers in Galatia were most likely not Gentile Judaizers, but rather Jewish Judaizers - the οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι of Gal. 6:13.

Paul gives two reasons why his opponents want to compel the Galatians to be circumcised: (1) they may boast in the flesh and (2) avoid the persecution caused by the preaching of the cross of Christ.

Paul not only charges his opponents with wanting to boast in the flesh, but characterises them also as ὅσοι θέλουσιν εὐπροσωπῆσαι ἐν σαρκί. Εὐπροσωπέω occurs only here in the New Testament. Burton interprets εὐπροσωπέω in the light of εὐπρόσωπος "fair of face", εὐπροσωπία "fair of appearance" and σεμνοπροσωπέω "to assume a solemn face" (1921: 350). Schweizer understands ἐν σαρκί as "the flesh of circumcision" (TDNT 7: 130; cf. Bruce 1982: 268).<sup>6</sup> Taking the sentence as a whole, Burton follows Chrysostom in claiming that it means "to be popular with men" (1921: 351), while Lohse renders it as "to stand well with men" (TDNT 6: 779). It is highly probable that the full force of Paul's charge here is that his opponents are "those who want to please men by circumcision".

This interpretation is confirmed by Gal. 5:11 (εἰ περιτομὴν ἔτι κηρύσσω, τί ἔτι διώκομαι) and 1:10 (ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκειν; εἰ ἔτι ἀνθρώποις ἡρεσκον, Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἂν ἦμην). The possible situation in Galatia was that Paul primarily preached the gospel *along with* circumcision as other Judaizers did (ἔτι in both 1:10 and 5:11), but then changed his tactics and preached the cross of Christ *without* circumcision to the Gentiles. As a result, Paul's opponents,

perhaps his former colleagues, charged him with changing his tactics in order to please men (*sc.* Gentiles), to which Paul replied that the change brought him persecution rather than men's approval. Paul, therefore, maintained that it was not his failure to preach circumcision, but rather his opponents' preaching of circumcision that was pleasing to men (*sc.* Jews).

What then was the reason for this persecution? According to the context, it is not likely that the exact reason for the persecution was the proclamation of the cross itself, but rather that it was the preaching of the cross *without* circumcision (Gal. 5:11).<sup>7</sup> That is to say, the Judaizers wanted to compel the Galatians to be circumcised. Hence, when Paul preached the cross of Christ without circumcision, they persecuted him.

As regards the reason why the Judaizers wanted to compel the Galatians to be circumcised, Burton maintains that this was because "they wish to remain in good standing in the Jewish community" (1921: 349). Betz claims that Paul's opponents still regarded Christianity as a sect of Judaism and consequently, "their push for circumcision may indeed have been motivated by their fear of being excommunicated from Judaism" (1979: 316). Bruce (1982: 269) and Longenecker (1990: 291), following Jewett (1971: 206),<sup>8</sup> indicate that Paul's opponents intended to proselytise Gentiles by circumcision, because there was heavy pressure from a nomistic campaign in the late forties and early fifties, a campaign directed against all who had accepted, or even associated with, uncircumcised Gentiles. What Paul's opponents held was, therefore, "membership legalism", which insisted that Gentiles had to be circumcised in order to become members of God's people (see [2.1.2] on Rom. 2:25-29).

This is confirmed by Gal. 1:14 (περισσοτέρως ζηλωτῆς ὑπάρχων τῶν πατρικῶν μου παραδόσεων, *cf.* Phil. 3:6: κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν). Where the reason Paul himself gives for his persecution of the church is his "zeal". "Zeal" means to keep the covenant community pure and holy even by violence.<sup>9</sup> Paul says that he persecuted the church because of his "zeal". That means that he

regarded the proclamation of the church in Galatia, that is the preaching of the cross of Christ without circumcision, as apostasy which was harmful to the community. As a result, he attacked the church in order to stop the apostasy and keep the community pure.

Putting these suggestions together, the reason for the persecution is probably that there were some non-Christian zealots who still regarded circumcision as essential for admission into the community of God's people. As a result, they did their best to prevent all, including the new sect, the Christian congregation, from accepting uncircumcised Gentiles as members, in order to keep the community pure and holy. Certain Jewish Christian Judaizers followed this policy and required Gentiles to be circumcised. This is partly because they agreed with the conviction of the zealots and partly because they wanted to maintain their status in the Jewish community. Thus when the "Hellenists" proclaimed the cross of Christ without circumcision, the Jewish Christian Judaizers persecuted them.

Now we are ready to think about what Paul means by saying: οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι αὐτοὶ νόμον φυλάσσουσιν in Gal. 6:13a. We have seen that οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι refers to the Jewish Judaizers and that the reason why the Judaizers wanted to compel the Galatians to undertake circumcision is that both non-Christian zealots and Christian Judaizers intended to keep the community pure and holy by requiring all its members, including Gentiles, to be circumcised. And here, in 6:13a, Paul accuses his opponents of breaking the law. It is, therefore, fair to suggest that what concerns Paul's opponents, in Paul's view, is nationalism rather than God's commandments; that is, the requirement of circumcision in order to keep the community pure, rather than the observance of the law in response to God's saving grace. Consequently, Paul rebukes his opponents because they highlight the significance of circumcision only, but have no intention of observing the law in general.<sup>10</sup>

This suggestion is confirmed by Paul's warning in Gal. 5:2f. There, he reminds those who were prepared to undergo circumcision: παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ

περιτεμνομένῳ ὅτι ὀφειλέτης ἐστὶν ὅλον τὸν νόμον ποιῆσαι. This verse suggests that the Judaizers emphasize circumcision, but ignore the rest of the law. Paul, however, asserts that circumcision is only one item of the law and that if one wants to submit to the law, one has to observe the whole law, circumcision *and* the rest of the law.

To sum up Paul's teaching in Gal. 6:12f., Paul rejects his opponents' assertion that circumcision is the only element which is necessary for everyone, Jew and Gentile, to enter the community of God's people. Paul emphasizes that the rest of the law is as important as circumcision. Accordingly, he rebukes his opponents, saying that they insist only on circumcision, but do not pay attention to the rest of the law.

## Romans 2:1-24

In the opening verse of Rom. 2, Paul says:

Διὸ ἀναπολόγητος εἶ, ὦ ἄνθρωπε πᾶς ὁ κρίνων· ἐν ᾧ γὰρ κρίνεις τὸν ἕτερον, σεαυτὸν κατακρίνεις, τὰ γὰρ αὐτὰ πράσσεις ὁ κρίνων.

Paul's opponents may have agreed with his criticism of the Gentiles in Rom. 1:18-32. Indeed Jews often criticise Gentiles in the same way. Paul, then, however, turns his attack on his opponents,<sup>11</sup> claiming that as judges of Gentiles, they are "doing the very same things". This charge is not to be understood literally. What Paul really means here is rather that "Jews *too* are guilty of immorality of various kinds" (Ziesler 1989: 82, my italics).<sup>12</sup>

Paul's opponents are tempted to consider themselves as God's peculiar people. They therefore believe that God should treat them specially. Carras sums up their attitude as follows:

"since the Jews are God's chosen people, God must deal with them mercifully by treating them as his privileged ones in a way that exceeds Jewish historical priority, one aspect of their privileges which is rightfully theirs" (1992: 195; cf. Watson 1986: 110f.).<sup>13</sup>

This suggestion can be confirmed by Wis. 15:1-3:

"But you, our God, are kind and true,  
patient, and ruling all things in mercy,  
For even if we sin we are yours, knowing your power;  
but we will not sin, because we know that you acknowledge us as  
yours.  
For to know you is complete righteousness,  
and to know your power is the root of immortality."

Bassler maintains that the main theme of Rom. 2 is "God's impartiality" (v. 11: οὐ γάρ ἐστιν προσωποληψία παρὰ τῷ θεῷ). He defines "divine impartiality" as:

"the equality of Jew and Gentile before God's tribunal and the impartial standard of works by which both are evaluated" (1984: 49).

That is to say, Paul in Rom. 2:1-20 insists that God's blessing *and* wrath at the final judgment are extended to both Gentiles *and* Jews. Jews think that they are different from Gentiles, because they possess the covenant and the law.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, they claim to have a special relationship with God and to know his will (vv. 17-20: Εἰ δὲ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ἐπονομάζῃ καὶ ἐπαναπαύῃ νόμῳ καὶ καυχᾶσαι ἐν θεῷ καὶ γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα καὶ ..., cf. Carras 1992: 196; Käsemann 1980: 61f.; Dunn 1988: 95). Paul does not deny that the possession of the law is one of the Jewish privileges, but he denies that these advantages give them a different position before God (cf. Carras 1992: 196; Bassler 1982: 141). God is impartial in his judgment, judging Jews and Gentiles in different, but equivalent ways: God judges Jews who have the law by the law, while he judges Gentiles who do not have the law by principles apart from the law. (cf. Bassler 1982: 139-153; *idem*. 1984: 49-58; Roetzel 1972: 80-83).

Paul's accusations in 2:21-24 make it clear that Paul's main purpose in mentioning "divine impartiality" is to indicate the fact that Jews in fact commit sins, e.g., κλέπτειν, μοιχεύειν and ἱεροσυλεῖν, although they boast of their possession of the law and of their moral superiority. Paul says there:

ὁ οὖν διδάσκων ἕτερον σεαυτὸν οὐ διδάσκεις;  
ὁ κηρύσσων μὴ κλέπτειν κλέπτεις;  
ὁ λέγων μὴ μοιχεύειν μοιχεύεις;  
ὁ βδελυσσόμενος τὰ εἰδῶλα ἱεροσυλεῖς;



ὅς ἐν νόμῳ καυχᾶσαι, διὰ τῆς παραβάσεως τοῦ νόμου τὸν θεὸν  
ἀτιμάζεις.  
τὸ γὰρ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ δι' ὑμᾶς βλασφημεῖται ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν,  
καθὼς γέγραπται.

Stowers points out that here Paul is using the "diatribe" (διατριβή)<sup>15</sup> style of argument which is normally employed by Graeco-Roman philosophers. Stowers also claims that the first four sentences may be understood as statements, but that they read much more naturally as rhetorical questions (cf. 1981: 219, fn. 78; Cranfield 1975: 167; Ziesler 1989: 90f.; Moo 1991: 159). The aim of using the rhetorical question is to highlight "the wrong opinions or erroneous logic of the opponent" (Stowers 1981: 89). Therefore, the function of the four indicting rhetorical questions in vv. 21f. is to accuse Jews of participation in the very same activities which they condemn.<sup>16</sup>

In Rom. 2:17-24, Paul focuses his charge on Jewish teachers and leaders (cf. Watson 1986: 113; Stowers 1981: 112; Käsemann 1980: 68).<sup>17</sup> In v. 21a, Paul accuses his opponents of teaching others, but of not involving themselves in the teaching. A similar phenomenon is mentioned in *Aboth R. Nathan* 29 (8a):

"Thou hast many a man who teaches himself but does not teach others; many a man who teaches others but does not teach himself; many a man who teaches himself and others; and many a one who teaches neither himself nor others ... The man who teaches others but does not teach himself. How, for example? A man learns a piece of teaching twice or thrice, then teaches it to others and then concerns himself with it no further, but forgets it; that is one who teaches others but does not teach himself" (Str-B 3: 107; *cit.* Cranfield 1975: 168, fn. 1).

In vv. 21b-22, Paul condemns his opponents for committing sins which they teach others not to commit. This charge is not unusual in Judaism. *Deut. Rab.* 2 (198b):

"Rabbi Simlai said: ... There sits a learned one and publicly proclaims before the congregation: Thou shalt not lend on interest! and he himself lends on interest. He says: Thou shalt not steal! and he himself steals" (*cit.* Cranfield 1975: 168, fn. 2; cf. Str-B 3: 109-115).

Mt. 23:1-3 also gives evidence as follows:

Τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐλάλησεν τοῖς ὄχλοις καὶ τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ λέγων· ἐπὶ τῆς Μωϋσέως καθέδρας ἐκάθισαν οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι. πάντα οὖν ὅσα ἐὰν εἴπωσιν ὑμῖν ποιήσατε καὶ τηρεῖτε, κατὰ δὲ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν μὴ ποιεῖτε· λέγουσιν γὰρ καὶ οὐ ποιοῦσιν.

Paul's charges as listed in Rom. 2:21b-22 - κλέπτειν, μοιχεύειν and ἱεροσυλεῖν - are polemical. Barrett claims that high moral standards and monotheism are the main features which make Judaism attractive to the Gentile world (cf. 1991: 53; Dunn 1988: 80). As a result, Barrett interprets κλέπτειν with reference to Mal. 3:8f ("Will anyone rob God? Yet you are robbing me! But you say, 'How are we robbing you?' In your tithes and offerings! ... for you are robbing me - the whole nation of you!"). He furthermore understands μοιχεύειν in the light of Hos. 1-3 and Jer. 3:8 ("She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce ...") and interprets ἱεροσυλεῖς as "exalts himself as judge and lord over his fellow-creatures" (Barrett 1991: 54).

Although obviously not every Jew commits theft, adultery and idolatry (cf. Carras 1992: 199f.), it is still possible that some Jews commit such crimes. Individual Jews are accused of transgressing the law in the synoptic gospels and other Jewish literature.<sup>18</sup> In Mk. 7:21-23, for example, there are many vices, including theft and adultery, which are listed by Mark's Jesus in order to accuse the Pharisees and scribes: πορνείαι, κλοπαί, φόνοι, μοιχεῖαι, πλεονεξίαι, πονηρίαι, δόλος, ἀσέλγεια, ὀφθαλμὸς πονηρός, βλασφημία, ὑπερηφανία and ἄφροσύνη. Generally speaking, Diaspora Jews found it easier to commit sins such as theft and adultery than Jews in Palestine, because Diaspora Jews lived among the Gentiles for whom sexual immorality and idolatry were "traditional Gentile sins" (Sanders 1977: 455). It is, therefore, better to interpret all these charges literally (cf. Ziesler 1989: 91).

The prohibitions of theft and adultery are listed in the Decalogue (Ex. 20:14f.; Deut. 5:18f.; Jos. *Ant.* 3:92). In Rom. 2, κλέπτω very likely refers to the stealing of property, for example, the stealing of silver and gold (Gen. 44:5; Ex. 22:6f.), or of animals (Gen. 30:33; Ex. 21:37).<sup>19</sup> Μοιχεύω, in the Old Testament, means that a man has sexual intercourse with a married woman.<sup>20</sup> In Rom. 2, however, it may have a "simple sexual meaning" (Moo 1991: 160; BAGD: 526 s.v.).

Ἱεροσυλεῖς is very difficult to explain properly. Garlington renders it as (1) "idolatry" - the elevation of the law to a position which was never intended in God's plan and as (2) "sacrilege" - "Israel's preference for the law to the exclusion of Christ" (1990: 151). ~~Cranfield suggests that one should understand Ἱεροσυλεῖν in the more general sense of to "commit sacrilege". He says that the "Jew's abhorrence of idolatry out of loyalty to the one true God is his actually committing Ἱεροσυλία against the true God" (1975: 169; cf. Käsemann 1980: 71).~~

In Rom. 2:22, however, Ἱεροσυλέω is better taken literally, to "rob temples" (BAGD: 373 s.v.; cf. Sanday and Headlam 1902: 66). This probably refers to the removal of gold or silver idols from pagan shrines for one's own private use and profit (cf. Black 1989: 51; Dunn 1988: 114f.; Jos. *Ant.* 4:207; *Ap.* 2:237). A parallel prohibition is found in Deut. 7:25 and in the case of Achan in Josh. 7.

It is significant that μοιχεύσεις and κλέψεις appear once again in Rom. 13:8-10:

ὁ γὰρ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἕτερον νόμον πεπλήρωκεν. τὸ γὰρ οὐ μοιχεύσεις, οὐ φονεύσεις, οὐ κλέψεις, οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις, καὶ εἴ τις ἑτέρα ἐντολή, ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τούτῳ ἀνακεφαλαιοῦται [ἐν τῷ] Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν.

Paul lists four items of the Decalogue and the reference to "any other commandment" in Rom. 13:8-10. But in a parallel passage, Gal. 5:14, Paul says:

ὁ γὰρ πᾶς νόμος ἐν ἐνὶ λόγῳ πεπλήρωται, ἐν τῷ Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν.

It is, therefore, possible that the four commandments and the reference to "any other commandment" in Rom. 13:8-10 are equivalent to "the whole law" in Gal. 5:14. As a result, adultery and theft function as two examples of the Decalogue (cf. Moo 1991: 162; Cranfield 1975: 170) and of the whole law. What Paul has in mind when he mentions adultery and theft in both Rom. 13:8-10 and 2:21-22 is the "whole law", circumcision and the rest of the law, not just two particular items.

In Rom. 2, Paul is challenging Jewish over-confidence in God's favour and obligation to Israel (cf. Dunn 1988: 90). The Jews boast of their possessing the law (vv. 17-20), particularly circumcision (v. 25), but fail to observe the rest of the

law. Some Jews even believe that possession of the law is equivalent to having a safeguard at the time of judgment (*cf.* Carras 1992: 198). Paul criticizes them for this over-confidence and for their transgression of the law of which Paul lists κλέπτειν, μοιχεύειν and ἱεροσυλεῖν as examples. This is confirmed by Paul's accusation in 2:23, where he claims that his opponents dishonour God διὰ τῆς παραβάσεως τοῦ νόμου. Παράβασις, here, means "the transgression of a known, concrete divine commandment" (Cranfield 1975: 170, fn. 3).

It is, therefore, evident that *Paul does indeed accuse the Jews of breaking the law* (*cf.* Käsemann 1980: 71; Moo 1991: 162; Theissen 1987: 69; Räisänen 1987: 102).

## 2.1.2 Encouragement of the Jews

It has been argued above that Paul does not prohibit Jews from observing the law. On the contrary, he rebukes Jews for breaking the law. In this section, the theme under discussion is that Paul goes much further and encourages Jews to obey the whole law (Rom. 2:25-29; 1 Cor. 7:19) and that he himself even practises the law when necessary (1 Cor. 9:20).

### Romans 2:25-29

In Rom. 2:25-29, Paul turns his concern to circumcision. He says:

Περιτομή μὲν γὰρ ὠφελεῖ ἐὰν νόμον πράσσης· ἐὰν δὲ παραβάτης νόμου ᾖ, ἡ περιτομή σου ἀκροβυστία γέγονεν. ἐὰν οὖν ἡ ἀκροβυστία τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσῃ, οὐχ ἡ ἀκροβυστία αὐτοῦ εἰς περιτομὴν λογισθήσεται; καὶ κρινεῖ ἡ ἐκ φύσεως ἀκροβυστία τὸν νόμον τελοῦσα σὲ τὸν διὰ γράμματος καὶ περιτομῆς παραβάτην νόμου. οὐ γὰρ ὁ ἐν τῷ φανερῷ Ἰουδαῖός ἐστιν οὐδὲ ἡ ἐν τῷ φανερῷ ἐν σαρκὶ περιτομή, ἀλλ' ὁ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ Ἰουδαῖος, καὶ περιτομή καρδίας ἐν πνεύματι οὐ γράμματι, οὐ ὁ ἔπαινος οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ.

Circumcision<sup>21</sup> is the "official symbol of the covenant" which functions as "an act of dedication witnessing to the fact that the person belongs to the people of Yahweh" (Eichrodt 1961: 138; cf. Ziesler 1989: 92; Moo 1991: 163).<sup>22</sup> It is possible that most Jews, including Paul's opponents, believe that, in keeping circumcision, they will surely have protection from divine wrath on the day of judgment (cf. Moo 1991: 164f.; Cranfield 1975: 172, fn. 1: circumcision is "a certain passport to salvation"; *Ex. Rab.* 19 [81c]: "no person who is circumcised will go down to Gehenna", *cit.* Moo 1991: 163). Käsemann states that "in the Jewish view *only* circumcision grants a share in God's covenant with Israel" (Käsemann 1980: 72, my italics). Consequently, Jews over-emphasize the importance of circumcision, but ignore the rest of the law. This is what Paul charges his opponents in Rom. 2:1-24.

Circumcision also functions as a rite which signifies "the removal of uncleanness and at the same time adoption into the community of the people of God with the obligation of keeping its sacred status" (Eichrodt 1961: 139). Eichrodt indicates that the covenant community does not exclude the stranger at all. On the contrary, Jews continually absorb outsiders into the community by requiring them to submit themselves to "the will of the divine Lord of the Covenant" and to vow themselves to this particular God (1961: 39). Many Jews, including Paul's opponents, however, insist that, without undertaking circumcision, one cannot be counted as a member of the people of the covenant (cf. Dunn 1988: 120; *Jos. Ant.* 13:257f., 318). This is the reason why Paul's opponents want to impose circumcision on those Gentiles who want to become members of God's people.

In 2:25a, Paul agrees with his opponents and recognizes circumcision as valuable (cf. BAGD: 900 s.v. ὠφελέω, 2b), but he adds a condition - νόμον πρόσεειν. This suggests that Paul still recognizes that circumcision is the symbol of the covenant community and that, being assigned by God, it is important for Jews to observe the custom (cf. Dunn 1988: 121). In the Jewish view, circumcision is part of the law. Paul's opponents, however, over-emphasize the role of

circumcision and ignore the rest of the law. Paul, therefore, maintains that the law cannot be divided up and that circumcision is indeed valuable for Jews as the symbol of belonging to the covenant community, but only when the law is observed as a whole - they are to observe *not only* circumcision *but also* the rest of the law.<sup>23</sup> In other words, as Paul says in 2:25b, if a Jew is παραβάτης νομοῦ,<sup>24</sup> then circumcision will lose its significance, *i.e.*, it cannot be the symbol of belonging to God's people anymore. Without obedience to the rest of the law, circumcision is equivalent to uncircumcision (*cf.* Moo 1991: 165).

According to Rom. 2:1-24, what Paul's opponents hold is certainly not normal "legalism" which implies the desire to earn God's favour by means of religiously keeping of the law, because Paul, there, accuses his opponents of *breaking* it. Neither do they subscribe to "covenantal nomism",<sup>25</sup> the Jewish belief that one is saved by God's election and that obedience to the law is required in response to this election, for the observance of the law in "covenantal nomism" is certainly not circumcision only, but the rest of the law also. Paul's opponents, however, only emphasize the importance of circumcision which is regarded as the symbol of membership of the covenant community and pay no attention to the rest of the law which is also important in "covenantal nomism". In fact, it is Paul, not his opponents, who holds to the conviction of "covenantal nomism".<sup>26</sup>

What Paul's opponents hold is best described as "membership legalism": (1) Jews believe that they can be saved by membership of the covenant community,<sup>27</sup> (2) therefore they treat circumcision as the most important law, because it is the sign of their belonging. (3) They do not observe the law apart from circumcision (and perhaps food laws and the sabbath), for the rest of the law is not important for membership.

In response to this "membership legalism", Paul subscribes to "covenantal nomism" and maintains that both circumcision *and* the rest of the law are equally important for the covenantal people in order to respond to God's saving grace. Consequently, Paul encourages Jews to obey the "whole law" - circumcision *and* the

rest of the law, rather than to keep circumcision *only* and ignore the rest of the law. It is noteworthy that Paul does not talk about God's election and saving grace in Rom. 2, perhaps because his opponents already share this conviction. In practice, therefore, Paul only emphasizes what his opponents ignore here - the keeping of the whole law, particularly the law apart from circumcision.

The vocabulary of Rom. 2:25-29 is alternately marked by his own "covenantal nomism" and his opponents' "membership legalism".<sup>28</sup> In the field of "membership legalism", Paul uses terms like νόμου παραβάτης, περιτομή ἐν σαρκί, φανερός and γράμμα. In the field of "covenantal nomism", he employs phrases like νόμον πράσσειν, τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσσειν, νόμον τελεῖν, περιτομή καρδίας, κρυπτός and πνεῦμα. Terms and phrases from the same field may have a similar meaning. Therefore, the meanings of περιτομή ἐν σαρκί, of φανερός and of γράμμα all converge on what it is to be νόμου παραβάτης, that is, on what it is to obey circumcision *only*, but to break the rest of the law. What περιτομή καρδίας, κρυπτός and πνεῦμα mean and what τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσσειν and νόμον τελεῖν precisely refer to is none other than νόμον πράσσειν - the observance of the whole law, that is, circumcision *and* the rest of the law.<sup>29</sup>

It is, therefore, fair to conclude that Paul, in Rom. 2:25-29, *asks Jewish Christians to obey the whole law in order to respond to God's saving grace*. This statement, however, seems to contradict Paul's general attitude to the law, namely that one is justified by faith, not by the law.<sup>30</sup> The main difficulty is: Paul speaks of God ὃς ἀποδώσει ἐκάστῳ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ in 2:6 and says οὐ γὰρ οἱ ἀκροαταὶ νόμου δίκαιοι παρὰ [τῷ] θεῷ, ἀλλ' οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου δικαιωθήσονται in 2:13. These statements seem to contradict Rom. 3:20a: ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ.

The point of convergence between these verses is ἔργα, οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου and ἔργα νόμου. Snodgrass defines ἔργα νόμου in 3:20 as "'works done in the flesh', i.e. from a merely human context" (1986: 84). They seem to be works



marked by "legalism", because Snodgrass classifies ἔργα νόμου and γράμμα, σάρξ and ἁμαρτία as belonging to the same group (cf. 1986: 85). Then Snodgrass puts ἔργον and πνεῦμα, τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου φυλάσσειν in a second group and interprets ἔργα in 2:6 as "godly obedience", thereby making a connection with 2:7 (καθ' ὑπομονὴν ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ) and 2:10 (τῷ ἐργαζομένῳ τὸ ἀγαθόν, cf. 1986: 84f.). To interpret ἔργα in 2:6 in the light of 2:6-10 is to move in the right direction. The meaning of "godly obedience", however, is still not clear. It is likely that what Paul wants his audience to do here is simply "to do what is right" persistently (Black 1989: 45). For Jews, "what is right" very likely refers to the whole law, because Paul says, in 2:18, γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα καὶ δοκιμάζεις τὰ διαφέροντα κατηχούμενος ἐκ τοῦ νόμου. Here, therefore, Paul is talking in terms of "covenantal nomism".

The verb, ποιέω, in 2:13 is normally used to indicate "obedient or disobedient action in relation to the Law, the will of God" with the emphasis that observance of the law "must be consistent, unwearied, unbroken and total" (Braun *TDNT* 6: 478, 480). Paul possibly uses ποιηταί in the same sense in 2:13 (and cf. ποιῶσιν in 2:14) - Jew must observe the law as a whole, rather than simply hear the law and keep circumcision only.<sup>31</sup> Again, what Paul emphasizes here is the contrast between his "covenantal nomism" and his opponents' "membership legalism". Ἔργα νόμου in Rom. 3:20 most likely refers to Paul's opponents' "membership legalism" - observing circumcision in order to be a loyal and pious Jew, but observing circumcision *only*.

It is, therefore, fair to conclude that the distinction between ἔργα in 2:6, οἱ ποιηταὶ νόμου in 2:13 and ἔργα νόμου in 3:20a is the difference between Paul's "covenantal nomism" and his opponents' "membership legalism". In 2:6 and 2:13, Paul preaches "covenantal nomism" and encourages Jews to observe the law as a whole in order to receive God's acquittal at the Last Judgment.<sup>32</sup> In 3:20a, on the other hand, Paul challenges his opponents' "membership legalism" and maintains that not everyone (πᾶσα σὰρξ), neither Jew nor Gentile, can be justified at the



Last Judgment by circumcision. Circumcision is valuable for Jews, not in isolation, but only when they observe the whole law.

## 1 Corinthians 7:19

Paul says in 1 Cor. 7:19:

ἡ περιτομή οὐδέν ἐστιν καὶ ἡ ἀκροβυστία οὐδέν ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ.

Similar statements are found in Gal. 5:6 (ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ οὔτε περιτομή τι ἰσχύει οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη) and in Gal. 6:15 (οὔτε γὰρ περιτομή τί ἐστιν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις).<sup>33</sup> The context in Galatia and Corinth, however, is different. In Galatia, Paul is facing Judaizers who not only emphasize the importance of circumcision as Paul's opponents do in Rom. 2, but who also want to impose circumcision on Gentiles. Therefore, Paul intends to persuade the Galatians to look for καινὴ κτίσις and πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη rather than undertake circumcision. In Corinth, however, Paul faces certain "spirituals", or "pneumatics", who, in an atmosphere of eschatology, believe that changing one's social status, especially, one's marital status, has value for salvation. Consequently, Paul urges the Corinthians to stay in their original situation, rather than to embark upon such changes, because changing one's social status has nothing to do with salvation (see [4.2.2] on 1 Cor. 7:17-24).

On the issue of circumcision, Paul also urges the Corinthians to maintain their original status: περιτετμημένος τις ἐκλήθη, μὴ ἐπισπάσθω· ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ κέκληταί τις, μὴ περιτεμνέσθω (1 Cor. 7:18). Paul gives the reason why, in 7:19, he encourages the Corinthians not to seek circumcision, but rather to seek τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ.

Most commentators interpret τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ as obedience to the will of God (cf. Barrett 1971: 169; Fee 1988: 313f.). Ἐντολή, however, may also

refer to "the law" (*cf.* BAGD: 269 *s.v.* 2a; Schrenk *TDNT* 2: 552). For example, the sabbath commandment referred to in Lk. 23:56b (καὶ τὸ μὲν σάββατον ἡσυχάσαν κατὰ τὴν ἐντολήν) is described in the Decalogue (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15). Therefore, this commandment should be classified as part of "the law". In other words, in Luke, ἐντολή and νόμος are virtually interchangeable.

Yet, more strikingly, Paul also sees ἐντολή and νόμος as interchangeable in Rom. 7:8-14. There, Paul uses ἐντολή and νόμος in turn without any distinction:

ἀφορμὴν δὲ λαβοῦσα ἡ ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς κατειργάσατο ἐν ἐμοὶ πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν· χωρὶς γὰρ νόμου ἁμαρτία νεκρά. ἐγὼ δὲ ἔζων χωρὶς νόμου ποτέ, ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἡ ἁμαρτία ἀνέζησεν, ἐγὼ δὲ ἀπέθανον καὶ εὗρέθη μοι ἡ ἐντολή ἡ εἰς ζωὴν, αὕτη εἰς θάνατον· ἡ γὰρ ἁμαρτία ἀφορμὴν λαβοῦσα διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἐξηπάτησέν με καὶ δι' αὐτῆς ἀπέκτεινεν. ὥστε ὁ μὲν νόμος ἅγιος καὶ ἡ ἐντολή ἁγία καὶ δίκαια καὶ ἀγαθή ... ἵνα γένηται καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλὸς ἡ ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς. Οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ὁ νόμος πνευματικὸς ἐστίν ...

It is, therefore, very possible that ἐντολή in 1 Cor. 7:19 refers either to "the law" or to "God's will". Paul's teaching here is very likely two-fold: (1) Paul asks the *Gentiles* to obey God's will rather than to receive circumcision and (2) Paul encourages *Jews* to observe the law as a whole rather than remove circumcision.

## 1 Corinthians 9:20

In 1 Cor. 9:20, Paul says:

καὶ ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαῖος, ἵνα Ἰουδαίους κερδήσω· τοῖς ὑπὸ νόμον ὡς ὑπὸ νόμον, μὴ ὦν αὐτὸς ὑπὸ νόμον, ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον κερδήσω·

The key verb in this verse, γίνομαι, can be used with a noun to indicate a person who changes his nature and enters a new condition (*cf.* BAGD: 159 *s.v.* 4). The particle, ὡς, may introduce the characteristic quality of a person (*cf.* BAGD: 898 *s.v.* III). When Ἰουδαῖος is used as a noun, it refers to a Jew with respect to birth, race, or religion (*cf.* BAGD: 379 *s.v.* 2). Paul usually uses Ἰουδαῖος as a singular noun without the article to indicate that Ἰουδαῖος is "a type, a spiritual or religious magnitude" (Gutbrod *TDNT* 3: 380). In 1 Cor. 9:20,

Ἰουδαῖος is understood by Paul on the basis of a specific relation, namely attachment to the law (cf. Gutbrod *TDNT* 3: 381). In the present context, Paul is already a Jew in terms of race. As a result, the noun Ἰουδαῖος should refer to the religious dimension, namely commitment to the law (cf. Goudge 1903: 77; Barrett 1971: 211; Gutbrod *TDNT* 3: 381).

Moreover, γίνομαι ὡς Ἰουδαῖος is further defined by ὑπὸ νόμον.<sup>34</sup> The preposition ὑπὸ with the accusative can be used to indicate a situation in which one is under some kind of power, rule, sovereignty or command (cf. BAGD: 843 s.v. 2b). Ziesler, therefore, interprets ὑπὸ νόμον as "adherence to the Law" (1989: 165 on Rom. 6:14: οὐ γὰρ ἐστε ὑπὸ νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν).<sup>35</sup> In short, what Paul wants to emphasize in 1 Cor. 9:20 is very likely that when he is in the company of Jews, he *practises* the law as other Jews do.<sup>36</sup>

Paul's purpose in observing the law in Jewish company is ἵνα Ἰουδαίους κερδήσω and ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον κερδήσω. Furthermore, when Paul says that he performs the law, he still emphasizes: μὴ ὡς αὐτοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον.<sup>37</sup> That is to say, Paul's practice of the law is a missionary tactic directed at the Jews.<sup>38</sup> Paul does not regard the law as the condition for becoming God's people, nor does he agree that the law is necessary for the Gentiles to respond to faith. Nevertheless, Paul recognizes the significance of the law for the Jews. Therefore, he not only encourages the Jews to obey the law, but he himself also does not hesitate to practise the law in Jewish company.<sup>39</sup>

## Summing Up

In Rom. 2:25-29, Paul asks Jews to abandon "membership legalism" and to adopt his "covenantal nomism" - to obey the whole law, not just circumcision - in order to respond properly to God's saving grace. 1 Cor. 7:19 confirms that Paul encourages Jews to practise the law, although the context of this instruction is very different from the situation in Galatia. 1 Cor. 9:20 is significant in support of the

conclusion: (1) Paul not only asks Jews to observe the law, but himself also practises the law when it is necessary. (2) Observance of the law is regarded by Paul as a missionary tactic, not as a condition for earning God's favour. That is to say, Paul regards observance of the law as *optional* (cf. Räisänen 1985: 549; Bruce 1988: 125). Jews may obey the law in response to God's saving grace, but not in order to earn God's grace, or to maintain their membership of the covenantal community.

In short, *Paul does teach Jews to obey the law as a whole in order to respond properly to God's saving grace.*

### 2.1.3 The Reasons

Paul encourages Jews to obey the whole law. This is because *the law is so important for Jews that unless they are allowed to continue to obey the law, it will be very difficult for them to become Christians.* Allowing them to obey the law is, therefore, Paul's way of conducting his mission to Jews.

The law has been at the heart of Israel's religion since they were elected as God's peculiar people and given the covenant. The statement "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me ..." (Ex. 20:2f.; Deut. 5:6f.) is the foundation of the divine law-giving and of the establishment of the Israelite community (cf. Harrelson *IDB* 3: 80). Israelite community was, therefore, established on the basis of God's election, his redemption of Israel from Egypt, his initiative in making the covenant on Sinai and in giving them the law. The covenant is two-sided: (1) on God's side, he has delivered Israel and will continue to protect her; (2) on the human side, Israel has to respond to God's grace by fulfilling her covenantal obligation, that is, by obedience to God's guidance as given in the law (cf. Küng

1992: 42). The law is, therefore, understood as given to show Israel both how to live as a covenant people and how to remain within the covenant (cf. Dunn 1990e: 242f.; Küng 1992: 42). Hence, Deut. 4:31-33:

"But you (*sc.* Moses), stand here by me (*sc.* Yahweh), and I will tell you all the commandments, the statutes and the ordinances, that you shall teach them (*sc.* Israelites), so that they may do them in the land that I am giving them to possess. You must therefore be careful to do as the Lord your God has commanded you; you shall not turn to the right or to the left. You must follow exactly the path that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you are to possess."

Although most of the law was adopted from Israel's neighbours, it was re-interpreted in the light of the covenant relationship. Before the Exile, the law had become "a comprehensive system of commandments and prohibitions regulating the entire life of the nation and the individual" (Fohrer 1973: 85).

The destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem and the following Babylonian exile was a huge disaster for Israel. Ezekiel explains the reason for the Exile as follows:

"But she (*sc.* Jerusalem) has rebelled against my (*sc.* Yahweh's) ordinances and my statutes ... rejecting my ordinances and not following my statutes. Therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you (*sc.* Israel) are more turbulent than the nations that are all around you, and have not followed my statutes or kept my ordinances, but have acted according to the ordinances of the nations that are all around you; therefore thus says the Lord God: I, I myself, am coming against you; I will execute judgments among you in the sight of the nations" (Ezek. 5:6-8).

The hope of restoration, therefore, came from God's forgiveness and from people's strict observance of the law. Jer. 31:31-34:

"The days are surely coming ... this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my *law* within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will *forgive* their iniquity, and remember their sin no more."

Ezekiel too indicates the importance of the observance of the law after the restoration. Ezek. 44:23f.:

"They (*sc.* priests) shall teach my people the difference between the *holy* and the *common*, and show them how to distinguish the *unclean* and the

*clean*. In a controversy they shall act as judges, and they shall decide it according to my judgments. They shall keep my *laws* and my statutes regarding all my appointed festivals, and they shall keep my *sabbaths* holy."

It is, therefore, not surprising that the main parts of priestly legislation were gathered together and elaborated during the Exile and that the final edition of the law was compiled about one century after the restoration (*cf.* Harrelson *IDB* 3: 86, 88; Neh. 8:1: "all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of *the law of Moses*, which the Lord had given to Israel").

During the Maccabean crisis, the law became constitutive of Jewish national identity. It served to separate Jews from the other nations and also from Hellenism (*cf.* Dunn 1990e: 243). Strict observance of the law, therefore, became the characteristic of the pious Jew in both politics and religion. Sanders also indicates that during the time of Jesus and of Paul, observance of the law was strongly required by Judaism (*cf.* 1977: 107-110, 271f., 442f.; Gutbrod *TDNT* 4: 1047-1059). *E.g.*, Bar. 4:1-4:

"She (*sc.* Torah) is the book of the commandments of God,  
the *law* that endures forever.  
All who hold her fast will live,  
and those who forsake her will die.  
Do not give your glory to another,  
or your advantages to an alien people.  
Happy are we, O Israel,  
for we know what is pleasing to God."

After the Romans took over Palestine, Torah observance was encouraged by the Roman authorities. Meeks indicates that when the times were tranquil, the Roman provincial administrators gave a degree of "self-government" to the "nations" by allowing them to follow their "ancestral laws" (*cf.* 1986: 94). Moreover, in New Testament times, "most Jews agreed that God had given very specific commandments to his people and that the premier way in which one proved faithful was by obeying them" (1986: 95).

It is, therefore, evident that observance of the law was so important for Jews that it seemed to be very difficult to ask them to abandon the law. This is the

reason why Paul had to allow them to continue to obey the law after they became Christians. These are Paul's missionary tactics - to allow Jews to obey the law in order to "gain" (ἵνα ... κερδήσω, 1 Cor 9:20) them.

The practical reason, however, is only half the story, for Paul also recognizes that the law is still valid for Jews in terms of revealing God's will and of providing ways of responding to God's grace. In other words, Paul recognizes that the law is a Jewish "advantage" which is given by God. The evidence is taken from Rom. 4:9-12; 3:1-2; 9:4.

### Romans 4:9-12

Most commentators rightly indicate that Paul's main argument in Rom. 4:9-12 is based upon Abraham's faith preceding his circumcision. The determining element for Gentiles as regards their claim to righteousness is, therefore, faith rather than circumcision. It is also clear, however, that in this passage Paul is not only arguing on behalf of the Gentiles, but is also recognizing the significance of circumcision for the Jews. Paul's use of καί in v. 9 and οὐ μόνον / ἀλλὰ καί in v. 12 indicates that Paul has already recognized that the blessing is given to the circumcised. Therefore what concerns him now is that Gentiles may receive the same blessing by faith (*cf.* Dunn 1988: 208f.).

In Rom. 4:1, Paul confesses that Abraham is ὁ προπάτωρ ἡμῶν κατὰ σάρκα. It is very likely that when talking about κατὰ σάρκα, what Paul has in mind, at least in part, is the circumcising of the σάρξ of the foreskin (*cf.* Schweizer *TDNT* 7: 129f.).<sup>40</sup> It is, therefore, fair to say that Paul regards Abraham as the ancestor of Jews because of Abraham's circumcision. In other words, Paul *does not reject the continuing value of circumcision for the Jews.*

Then, when talking about the blessing of Ps. 32:1-2, Paul says: Ὁ μακαρισμὸς οὖν οὗτος ἐπὶ τὴν περιτομὴν ἢ καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκροβυστίαν; (Rom. 4:9); Dunn points out that Paul's use of καί here is important. He says:



"The καί should be noted. Paul does not pose the question as an either - or, either circumcised *or* uncircumcised. He accepts that the blessedness ... comes to the circumcised. His question is whether it comes to the uncircumcised *as well*" (1988: 208, his italics; cf. Räisänen 1987: 172).

After emphasizing Abraham's faith, Paul subsequently mentions his circumcision in Rom. 4:10. The fact that Abraham was circumcised (Gen. 17) after having been reckoned as righteousness (Gen. 15:6) is very likely the main point that Paul's opponents hold against him.<sup>41</sup> Paul, however, re-interprets the Abraham tradition and puts his emphasis on the point that Abraham was reckoned as righteous when he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him πατέρα πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων δι' ἀκροβυστίας (Rom. 4:11b) and πατέρα περιτομῆς τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς στοιχοῦσιν τοῖς ἵχνεσιν τῆς ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ πίστεως τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ (4:12). That means that "because Abraham believed while uncircumcised, he is the father of all Gentile believers; because he believed and was *also* circumcised, he is qualified to be the father of all Jewish believers" (Moo 1991: 274, his italics; cf. Cranfield 1975: 237). In both cases, Paul's emphasis is certainly on Abraham's faith. The significance of Abraham's circumcision, however, is not ignored. Paul recognizes that Abraham's circumcision is one of the reasons why Abraham is called the father of the circumcised. Accordingly, it is fair to conclude that, in Paul's mind, circumcision is significant for the Jews.

This conviction is confirmed by Paul's use of οὐ μόνον / ἀλλὰ καὶ rather than οὐκ / ἀλλά in 4:12. This usage clearly indicates that Paul "accepts circumcision's continuing role as a mark of the Jewish people" (Dunn 1988: 211). In other words, Paul *recognizes that circumcision is revealed by God and that keeping it is one of the appropriate responses a Jew may make to God's saving grace.*

More strikingly, Paul says in 4:11a: καὶ σημεῖον ἔλαβεν περιτομῆς σφραγίδα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐν τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ. The basic meaning of σημεῖον is "sign" or "distinguishing mark" (BAGD: 747 s.v.).



However, Paul understands σημεῖον as not simply a sign, but as a sign of God's saving power and action as expressed in the language of miracles.<sup>42</sup> Sanday and Headlam claim that the genitive, περιτομῆς, is "a genitive of apposition or identity" (1902: 107; cf. Cranfield 1975: 236; Black 1989: 69). The phrase σημεῖον περιτομῆς, therefore, means "a sign consisting in circumcision" (cf. Sanday and Headlam 1902: 107; Black 1989: 69; Barrett 1991: 86, Moo 1991: 273).<sup>43</sup> This indicates that Paul regards circumcision still to be a valuable sign of God's saving action for Jews and that undertaking circumcision is still the appropriate response of Jews.

Then, Paul regards circumcision as a σφραγίς.<sup>44</sup> Σφραγίς in Rom. 4:11 means "legitimacy" (Black 1989: 69), or "conformation" (Käsemann 1980: 115; cf. Barrett 1991: 87; Moo 1991: 274; BAGD: 796f. s.v.; Fitzner TDNT 7: 949).<sup>45</sup> The same usage is found in 1 Cor. 9:2: εἰ ἄλλοις οὐκ εἰμὶ ἀπόστολος, ἀλλὰ γε ὑμῖν εἰμι· ἡ γὰρ σφραγίς μου τῆς ἀποστολῆς ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ. Here σφραγίς means "the legally valid attestation" (Conzelmann 1975: 152, fn. 11). That means that although Paul's opponents challenge his apostleship, the very existence of the church at Corinth "authenticates" his apostleship (Fee 1987: 397; cf. Käsemann 1980: 115; Moo 1991: 274; Barrett 1991: 87). In Rom. 4:9-12, Paul regards circumcision as a sign and a seal. This indicates that Paul recognizes that "Abraham's circumcision ... was nevertheless valuable as the outward and visible attestation of the status of righteousness which he already possessed" (Cranfield 1975: 236).

To sum up: although Paul's main emphasis is on Abraham's faith in Rom. 4:9-12, he still recognizes that Abraham's circumcision is the sign and seal which confirms, rather than is replaced by, Abraham's faith. It is *both* Abraham's faith *and* his circumcision that make him the father of Jewish Christians. In other words, Paul does not ignore the significance of circumcision. On the contrary, he recognizes that circumcision is still valuable for Jews, including Christian Jews, because it is assigned by God.

## Romans 3:1-2

In Rom. 3:1-2, Paul says:

τί οὖν τὸ περισσὸν τοῦ Ἰουδαίου ἢ τίς ἡ ὠφέλεια τῆς περιτομῆς; πολὺ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον. πρῶτον μὲν [γὰρ] ὅτι ἐπιστεύθησαν τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ.

In Rom. 3:1-8, Paul appears to meet the challenge of "whether the precedence of the Jews in salvation history has been completely cancelled according to 2:12-29" or not (Käsemann 1980: 78). According to the Old Testament, God has chosen Israel out of all nations to be his peculiar people, has given them the covenant and the law, and has bestowed upon them circumcision as the sign of that covenant. "If then there really is no advantage of the Jew and no profit in circumcision, this must mean either that the OT is a false witness or else that God has not been faithful to His word" (Cranfield 1975: 176f.; cf. Barrett 1991: 59).

Paul begins his reply in 3:1 with two questions: τί τὸ περισσὸν τοῦ Ἰουδαίου; and τίς ἡ ὠφέλεια τῆς περιτομῆς; Then, he presents his answer in v. 2. This takes the form of a "philosophical conversation", "a technique evolved by the Cynic and Stoic schools for popularizing philosophical and ethical ideas" (Black 1989: 53).

The adjective περισσός means "exceeding the usual number or size". It, therefore, means "the advantage" of the Jews in Rom. 3:1 (BAGD: 651 s.v. 1). The noun ὠφέλεια with the genitive is used to indicate "use", "gain", or "advantage" (BAGD: 900 s.v.). Ziesler claims that the circumcision spoken of here is very likely "physical circumcision", simply because the belief that "inward circumcision is of value is not in question and does not need defending" (1989: 95). By asking these questions, Paul wants to demonstrate that "being a Jew is an advantage" and that "being circumcised is of value" (Dunn 1988: 130).

The advantage Paul mentions in the present passage<sup>46</sup> is: ἐπιστεύθησαν τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ. The passive verb ἐπιστεύθησαν with an accusative means "to

be entrusted with something" (Cranfield 1975: 178). This originally had a "technical sense found in ancient law governing deposits" (Käsemann 1980: 79). Cranfield finds it significant that Paul does not say that the Jews have been given the λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ, but that they have been entrusted with them. This means that the Jews "have been given them not to do what they like with them but to conduct themselves towards them according to the will of Him who has entrusted them to them, and to Him they will have to give account" (Cranfield 1975: 179, fn. 3).

The noun λόγιον in non-Jewish literature means "divine utterance, oracle" (Doeve 1953: 115), or "an oracle given by God" (Cranfield 1975: 178, fn. 1), or "a saying which may be traced back to the deity" (Kittel *TDNT* 4: 137). In the LXX, λόγιον is used for the "Word of God" (e.g., Isa. 5:24 LXX: τὸ λόγιον τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰσραὴλ παρώξυναν). Therefore, λόγιον τοῦ θεοῦ is in some sense equivalent to λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (*cf.* Kittel *TDNT* 4:137; Cranfield 1975: 178f., fn. 1). Doeve claims that λόγιον in the LXX refers to the Torah (*cf.* Doeve 1953: 120).

To sum up, λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ refers to God's revelation in the Old Testament, or more precisely in the Sinai covenant and the law.<sup>47</sup> Paul, in Rom. 3:1-2, clearly indicates that circumcision and the whole of God's revelation on Sinai, namely the covenant and the law, are Jewish advantages. Paul gives a more detailed list of Jewish advantages in Rom. 9:4.

## Romans 9:4

In Rom. 9:4,<sup>48</sup> Paul lists the advantages of Jews as follows:

οἵτινές εἰσιν Ἰσραηλῖται, ὧν ἡ υἱοθεσία καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ αἱ διαθήκαι καὶ ἡ νομοθεσία καὶ ἡ λατρεία καὶ αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι.

For Paul, the covenantal name, Ἰσραηλῖται, always refers to the special Jewish position as the chosen people of God (*cf.* Cranfield 1979: 461; Dunn 1988: 526), that is, "the whole community of those chosen by, and united in the worship of,

Yahweh" (Cranfield 1979: 460). This name was given by God to the patriarch Jacob (Gen. 32:28: "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel"; cf. Gen. 35:10-12), from which the twelve tribes sprang. The name, Ἰσραήλ, is the people's preferred name for themselves, while "Jews" is the name by which they are known to others (cf. Gutbrod TDNT 3: 371f.; Dunn 1988: 526).

Although Rom. 9:4 is the only place in the New Testament where ἡ υἱοθεσία refers to the Jews, the notion of Israel as God's son is not unusual in the Old Testament (cf. Ziesler 1989: 236; Black 1989: 124; e.g., Ex. 4:22f.: "Israel is my firstborn son"; Hos. 11:1: "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son"). Wolff claims that to be a son of Yahweh denotes the personal relationship of love: care, guidance, and obedience (cf. 1974: 198). In Rom. 8:15, Paul talks about πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας in contrast to πνεῦμα δουλείας. This statement means that it is "the son, and not the slave, who had the right to inheritance" (Black 1989: 114). In the light of this understanding, although sonship in Rom. 9:4 refers to Israel, Paul still emphasizes that "Israel's sonship is a matter of grace, a moral relationship, not to be thought of in any naturalistic or mythological way" (Cranfield 1979: 461; cf. Ziesler 1989: 236; Dunn 1988: 526).

Δόξα may refer to the *shekinah*, "the bright cloud that both revealed and veiled God's presence with Israel in the wilderness and in the Temple" (Ziesler 1989: 237; cf. Dunn 1988: 526; Murray 1965: 5; Käsemann 1980: 258f.; Cranfield 1979: 461f.). The glory of God appeared in the congregation (Ex. 16:10), on Sinai (Ex. 24:16), in the tabernacle (Ex. 40:34), in the mercy-seat in the holy of holies (Lev. 16:2) and in the Temple (1 Kings 8:10f.). The function of the presence of God is to claim his kingship (cf. Epp 1986: 82; Cranfield 1979: 462).

Although the singular form ἡ διαθήκη is found in P<sup>46</sup>, B, D, G and vg<sup>cl</sup>, the plural form, αἱ διαθήκαι, is preferred by most commentators (cf. Cranfield 1979: 462; Dunn 1988: 527; Murray 1965: 5, fn. 7), because the plural form is not unusual, particularly in the apocrypha (e.g., Sir. 44:12: ἐκγονα αὐτῶν ἐν ταῖς διαθήκαις, 2 Macc. 8:15: ἀλλὰ διὰ τὰς πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας αὐτῶν διαθήκας).

In Rom. 9:5, διαθῆκαι very likely refers to the covenants of both Sinai and Abraham.<sup>49</sup>

Immediately after the covenant of Sinai, Paul spells out the advantage for the Jews, ἡ νομοθεσία. Käsemann claims that ἡ νομοθεσία "hardly refers to possession of the law", but "to the act of giving it" (1980: 259). Cranfield, Dunn and Ziesler, however, all maintain that νομοθεσία refers to the giving *and* the possession of the law and that possessing the law is reckoned by Paul as the most excellent of the privileges of Israel (*cf.* Cranfield 1979: 463, 846; Dunn 1988: 527; Ziesler 1989: 237).

Paul, then, specifies the law of λατρεία. Λατρεία originally referred to "the worship of the Temple cult" (Dunn 1988: 527; *cf.* Käsemann 1980: 259; Ziesler 1989: 238; Black 1989: 125; Cranfield 1979: 463). Later it referred more widely to worship (*cf.* Black 1989: 125), *e.g.*, "the faithful non-sacrificial worship of synagogue and pious Jewish home", including prayer, reading of the Scriptures, the observance of the Sabbath and the reciting of the Shema (*cf.* Cranfield 1979: 463). It is possible that Paul also has this non-sacrificial worship in mind, because he mentions τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν in Rom. 12:1.

The last advantage Paul lists here is αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι. Because Paul mentions οἱ πατέρες and ἐξ ὧν ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα in Rom. 9:5, αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι very likely refer both to "the promises of the fathers" (Dunn 1988: 528; *cf.* Ziesler 1989: 238; Cranfield 1979: 464) and to the "eschatological and messianic promises" (Cranfield 1979: 464; *cf.* Käsemann 1980: 259; Black 1989: 125).

To sum up Paul's argument in Rom. 9:4, he does maintain that to be a Jew certainly has advantages and that among these advantages the covenant and the law are the most important. Taking Paul's teachings in Rom. 4:9-12; 3:1-2 and 9:4 together, the reason why Paul uses law-oriented tactics in his mission to Jews is that in practice the law is so important that unless the Jews are allowed to continue to obey the law, it will be very difficult for them to become Christians. Moreover, theologically, Paul's arguments in Rom. 4:9-12, 3:1f. and 9:4, demonstrate that he

recognizes that to be a Jew does have certain advantages and that the law, circumcision in particular, is the most important among them. That is to say, Paul recognizes that the law is what God gives specifically to Israel. Consequently, Paul does not prohibit Jews from observing the law, but, on the contrary, encourages them to obey the whole law.

## Paul's Missionary Tactic Regarding Faith

It has been argued above that when Paul meets Jews, his missionary tactics concerning the law are designed to encourage them to obey the whole law in order to respond properly to God's saving grace in the crucifixion of Christ. That is to say, it is *faith* in Christ that is essential for salvation. Obedience to the whole law is regarded as only a response to this faith.

### 2.2.1 Paul's teaching

Both Paul and his opponents, Jewish *Christian* Judaizers, probably agree that faith in Christ is essential for salvation. The points they emphasize, however, may be different. Paul's opponents very likely regard faith and the law, circumcision in particular, as equally important, while Paul insists that only faith is essential and that the law is optional. In Gal. 2:15-16 and Phil. 3:2-11, Paul maintains that even a Jew who possesses all the Jewish advantages needs faith in order to become a Christian, because none of the Jewish advantages has anything to do with salvation.

### Galatians 2:15-16

In Gal. 2:15-16, Paul says:

Ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἐθνῶν ἁμαρτωλοί.

εἰδότες [δὲ] ὅτι οὐ δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ  
 δια πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,  
 καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν,  
 ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου,  
 ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ.

In the previous passage (Gal. 2:11-14), Paul rebukes Peter for his withdrawal from table fellowship with Gentile Christians, because they have not been circumcised (see [4.1.1] on Gal. 2:11-14). In 2:15-21, Paul explains the reason why having table fellowship with uncircumcised Gentiles is legal for devout Jews. In vv. 15f. Paul maintains that even Jews are justified by faith in Christ, rather than by "works of the law", circumcision in particular.

In Gal. 2:15-16 Paul sets forth the "self-definition" of Jewish Christians in terms of race (v. 15) and theological commitment (v. 16, *cf.* Betz 1979: 115; Longenecker 1990: 83). Paul uses ἡμεῖς in v. 15. This very likely refers to Paul and Peter and perhaps other Jewish Christians too, because Paul is talking to Peter from v. 14 onwards (εἶπον τῷ Κηφᾷ ἔμπροσθεν πάντων). In the Jewish understanding, they are Jews by birth<sup>50</sup> and not Gentiles, who are, by definition, outside the law and therefore are regarded as "sinners" (*cf.* Betz 1979: 115; Longenecker 1990: 83; Bruce 1982: 137).<sup>51</sup> In Gal. 2:15, Paul seems to recall what the "men from James" have claimed and prepares to correct it in v. 16. The "men from James" very likely maintained that it was only by birth and by circumcision that one could become a member of God's holy people. According to this view, therefore, *uncircumcised* Gentile Christians remain "sinners", because they do not belong to God's people.

Εἰδότες in 2:16 very likely indicates that "what follows is commonly held knowledge" (Longenecker 1990: 83). That means that Peter, having first been in agreement with Paul on what he says in 2:16-21, changes his mind because of the charge made by the "men from James". Therefore, Paul reminds Peter of what they had shared. The passive verb, δικαιούται, in 2:16 is very likely a "transfer term"<sup>52</sup> which refers to entrance into the community of God's people, here the Christian community.



Ἔργων νόμου<sup>53</sup> in 2:16 very likely reflects the main issue of the Antioch episode, that is, circumcision. The "men from James" possibly held the conviction of "membership legalism", namely that unless a Gentile undertakes circumcision, he cannot become a member of the community of God's people. Paul, however, disagrees with this conviction and claims that circumcision is not the essential condition for becoming a member of God's people. On the contrary, he claims that it is πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ that is the sole condition for all to enter the community of God's people. Πίστις Χριστοῦ in Gal. 2:16 means "faith in Christ" rather than "Christ's faith (or faithfulness)".<sup>54</sup>

Ἐὰν μὴ in 2:16a is best translated by "but",<sup>55</sup> because of the use of ἄνθρωπος which includes Jew and Gentile. Paul, in v. 16a,d (πάντα σάρξ) is talking in universal terms and stresses that the only condition for *all* to become members of God's people is "faith in Christ", not "works of the law". Then, in v. 16b,c, he turns his concern to the Jews in particular: ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου.

In 2:16b,c, δικαιωθῶμεν is connected with the aorist ἐπιστεύσαμεν.<sup>56</sup> Paul here concentrates his attention on the Jews and reminds Peter that not only does the Gentile become a member of the community of God's people by faith in Christ, but that even they, Paul and Peter, who are Jews by birth and have undergone circumcision, also need faith in Christ in order to become God's people. It is just for this reason and by this same faith that we become Christians.

To sum up, in Gal. 2:15-16, Paul reminds Peter that even though they are Jews by birth and by circumcision, they still must recognize that circumcision has nothing to do with salvation. As a result, they have come to believe in Christ in order to become members of God's people. In other words, *Paul emphasizes that even Jews, who possess circumcision, need faith in Christ in order to become members of the community of God's people.*



## Philippians 3:2-11

In Phil. 3:2-11, Paul clearly indicates that although he is a model Jew, with all the Jewish privileges, he needs faith in Christ in order to be justified.

In 3:2-3, Paul strongly condemns his opponents as "dogs",<sup>57</sup> "evil workers"<sup>58</sup> and κατατομή.<sup>59</sup> Paul also condemns his opponents in that they boast only of physical circumcision, but ignore faith in Christ.<sup>60</sup> On the contrary, it is Paul and his converts who are truly circumcised, for they worship in the spirit of God. This indicates that Paul seems to teach a spiritualized circumcision in order to contrast it with physical circumcision (*cf.* Beare 1973: 107). Circumcision of the heart is mentioned particularly in Jer. 4:4; 9:25f.<sup>61</sup> In both passages, circumcising the heart implies a change of ways, the removal of evil doing (*cf.* Carroll 1986: 158). In comparison with Jer., Paul here not only mentions spiritualized circumcision, but also rebukes his opponents as "evil workers". Paul's opponents are, therefore, very likely proponents of "membership legalism", those who insist that Gentiles must be circumcised.

In 3:4-6, Paul describes himself as a model Jew with all the Jewish privileges. In v. 4 (καίπερ ἐγὼ ἔχων πεποιθήσιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί. Εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἄλλος πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί, ἐγὼ μᾶλλον), Paul is arguing against his opponents' boasting and providing a foil for his positive argument in vv. 7-11 (*cf.* O'Brien 1991: 366; Silva 1988: 174). Because his opponents boast in the flesh, Paul claims that "his heritage and achievements as grounds for personal boasting were second to none" (O'Brien 1991: 365; *cf.* Beare 1973: 106) and that, although he possesses all the advantages, boasting in Christ is still all that matters (*cf.* O'Brien 1991: 366; Hawthorne 1983: 131).

Then, in 3:5-6, Paul lists seven advantages<sup>62</sup> which he enjoys: (1) περιτομή ὀκταήμερος,<sup>63</sup> (2) ἐκ γένους Ἰσραὴλ,<sup>64</sup> (3) φυλῆς Βενιαμίν,<sup>65</sup> (4) Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων,<sup>66</sup> (5) κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος,<sup>67</sup> (6) κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν,<sup>68</sup> (7) κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἁμεμπτος.<sup>69</sup>

O'Brien sums up Paul's argument in this passage as follows:

"Paul had considered himself a model Jew in every way. If others had grounds for confidence in the flesh, then he could match them at every point. In fact, he could surpass them, for he was a privileged member of the covenant people whom God had chosen for himself and set apart for holiness. Paul had responded in the appropriate way, even conforming to that righteousness rooted in the law" (1991: 381).

All Paul's sayings in 3:2-6 are a preparation for 3:7-11. Although Paul possesses all the Jewish advantages, to a greater extent even than his contemporaries, he nevertheless confesses:

[Ἄλλα] ἄτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη, ταῦτα ἦγμαι διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν. ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου, δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα, ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω καὶ εὐρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ, μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει, τοῦ γινῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ, εἰ πως καταντήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν (Phil. 3:7-11).

The contrast between κέρδος and ζημία dominates the main thought of vv. 7-8.<sup>70</sup> In the present passage, κέρδος and ζημία are best understood as "advantage" and "disadvantage" respectively (cf. Schlier *TDNT* 3: 672; Stumpff *TDNT* 2: 888).<sup>71</sup> What Paul once regarded as κέρδος and now regards as ζημία are all the Jewish advantages he enumerates in 3:5-6 (cf. Martin 1976: 129). In 3:8, Paul further claims that he regards "everything"<sup>72</sup> as σκύβαλα. Σκύβαλον means "dung", "refuse" or "scraps" after a meal, that is, something that is worthless or useless (cf. Lang *TDNT* 7: 445f.).<sup>73</sup> The use of ἡγέομαι is significant. The best interpretation is perhaps "to esteem" (Büchsel *TDNT* 2: 907; Stumpff *TDNT* 2: 890)<sup>74</sup>, for it reflects the fact that the "loss" spoken of by Paul is a "subjective loss" of value (Stumpff *TDNT* 2: 890). In other words, it is not the Jewish advantages *as such* that are valueless, but rather that, after a comparison and re-evaluation of the role of Jewish advantages in salvation history, Paul subjectively regards them as worthless.<sup>75</sup> In other words, Paul claims that Jewish advantages have nothing to do with becoming a member of God's people.

The reason why Paul regards his Jewish advantages as worthless is διὰ τὸν Χριστόν which is explained more fully as follows: (1) ἵνα Χριστόν κερδήσω, (2) εὐρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ and (3) διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου. All these expressions are likely similar (*cf.* Martin 1976: 131; O'Brien 1991: 391f.), but the last is probably the most important.

Χριστόν κερδαίνω means to "gain Christ, make him one's own" (BAGD: 429 s.v. κερδαίνω 1b; *cf.* Schlier *TDNT* 3: 673). Hawthorne suggests that Χριστόν κερδαίνειν is best understood in the light of the "profit and loss system" which Paul uses throughout the present passage (*cf.* 1983: 139). Paul uses the noun in 3:7 and claims that what before he regarded as κέρδος, he now regards as ζημία. He then employs the verb in 3:8 and says that he wants to κερδαίνειν Christ. This means that "Paul has given up all other forms of 'gain' (κέρδη), in order that he might get the true 'gain' (κερδήσω) which is Christ" (Hawthorne 1983: 139).<sup>76</sup>

The passive voice of εὐρίσκω in Phil. 3:9 is best interpreted in the sense of being exposed to, scrutinised and assessed by the "moral and religious judgment" of God (Preisker *TDNT* 2: 769; *e.g.*, in LXX, Gen. 44:16: ὁ θεὸς δὲ εὐρε τὴν ἀδικίαν τῶν παίδων σου.; Dan. 6:22: ὁ θεός μου ἀπέστειλε τὸν ἄγγελον αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐνέφραξε τὰ στόματα τῶν λεόντων, καὶ οὐκ ἔλυμηναντό με, ὅτι κατέναντι αὐτοῦ εὐθύτης εὐρέθη ἐμοί.; *cf.* also Neh. 9:8; and in the New Testament, Rev. 12:8: καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσεν οὐδὲ τόπος εὐρέθη αὐτῶν ἔτι ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, in Paul Gal. 2:17: εἰ δὲ ζητοῦντες δικαιωθῆναι ἐν Χριστῷ εὐρέθημεν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἁμαρτωλοί).<sup>77</sup> Paul, in 1 Cor. 15:15 (εὐρισκόμεθα δὲ καὶ ψευδομάρτυρες τοῦ θεοῦ), uses the verb to reflect the detection of a failure in responsibility. If Paul has these meanings in mind in Phil. 3:9, then the implication of the phrase, εὐρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ, is very likely that one communicates with Christ in order that one might do things properly and so be judged righteous and be saved.<sup>78</sup>

The most important reason why Paul regards all Jewish advantages as loss is διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου. Ὑπερέχω

with the genitive means to "be better than", "surpass", "exceed". (BAGD: 841 2b; cf. Delling *TDNT* 8: 523f.). Bultmann suggests that in Phil. 3:8 Paul's argument contains "Gnostic expressions",<sup>79</sup> but it is more likely that what Paul has in mind is the Old Testament understanding of γνῶσις (cf. O'Brien 1991: 388; Käsemann 1980: 280; Nicholson 1975: 71; Bultmann *TDNT* 1: 707). In the Old Testament, "knowledge" means insight into God's will and obedient submission to what is known (cf. Bultmann *TDNT* 1: 704f.).<sup>80</sup> In Phil. 3:8, therefore, γνῶσις means knowing and confessing Jesus as Lord and responding properly to this understanding.

The content of the γνῶσις that Paul mentions in Phil. 3:8 is Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ὁ κύριός μου. To be a κύριος is to be "the lawful owner of slaves and property" who has full authority of disposal (cf. Foerster *TDNT* 3: 1042-1046, 1082, 1086). Further meanings include ideas of being in control and being in a high position (cf. BAGD: 459, s.v. κύριος 1; Foerster *TDNT* 3: 1046, 1052). In the Old Testament, κύριος is one of Yahweh's names (cf. Quell *TDNT* 3: 1058f.). Israel confesses Yahweh as κύριος (e.g., 1 Kings 18:38f.). That means that Israel accepts God's sovereignty by obeying his will (cf. Quell *TDNT* 3: 1062f.; 1078f.).

In the New Testament, κύριος is normally ascribed to the risen Christ rather than to God (cf. Foerster *TDNT* 3: 1086f.). In Paul, κύριος is used of the risen Christ (Phil. 2:6-11), for his death, resurrection and exaltation have become the source of his lordship (Rom. 8:34; 14:9: εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ Χριστὸς ἀπεθάνεν καὶ ἔζησεν, ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ). Confessing Jesus as κύριος indicates that one chooses Jesus as the only foundation on which one wants to stand and that one is ready to submit to his lordship by obeying his direction (1 Cor. 1:10; 8:5f.; Mt. 7:21-23; Foerster *TDNT* 3: 1091f.). In this context, Paul's confession of Jesus as κύριος means that he intends to depend upon Jesus Christ rather than upon Jewish advantages in order to be justified. In 3:9, Paul develops this contrast by using the antithesis between ἐμὴ δικαιοσύνη ἐκ νόμου and δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ.

Paul says that he regards his Jewish advantages as "loss" in order that he "may be found in him" μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει. In Phil. 3:9, δικαιοσύνη is a "transfer term" (cf. Watson 1986: 79; see the comments on Gal. 2:16).<sup>81</sup> Paul contrasts two kinds of righteousness: Jewish righteousness which is based on the law and God's righteousness which is based on faith in Christ. The main difference between these two kinds of righteousness lies in their *function*.<sup>82</sup> Paul's ἐμὴ δικαιοσύνη is not "self-righteousness", but the righteousness spoken of in 3:4-6. This is actually the justification claimed by his opponents.<sup>83</sup> His opponents claim that one can be saved by membership of the covenant community and so for them, observing the practice of circumcision is the most important way of attaining salvation. Paul, on the other hand, asserts that for Jews this is a good way to respond to God's grace in giving the covenant, but not the way to gain justification. In other words, the *function* of keeping circumcision is to fulfil covenantal righteousness,<sup>84</sup> not to ensure salvation. As a result, Paul himself, a model Jew, even more "Jewish" than his opponents, has abandoned it in order to look for another more effective way of attaining righteousness, namely, by faith in Christ.

If the old righteousness is regarded as "justification by faith in *my* works", the new one may be understood as "justification by faith in *God's* works" (Templeton 1988: 8 [3.5], his italics). The new righteousness is "God's righteousness".<sup>85</sup> In the covenant relationship, God's righteousness is to be understood as his keeping his promise and protecting his people, while man's righteousness consists of making the proper response (cf. Ziesler 1989: 70). God's righteousness is equivalent to none other than his saving action and victory (cf. Black 1989: 33; Best 1967: 16).<sup>86</sup>

In the Old Testament, God's righteousness is especially applied to God's saving action in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and from the Babylonian captivity (cf. Black 1989: 33). Paul re-interprets this tradition and claims that God has done his new, saving grace in Jesus Christ (e.g., Rom. 3:24: δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῇ

αὐτοῦ χάριτι διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). In Phil. 3:9, therefore, Paul maintains that salvation cannot be obtained by the Jewish way which is based on covenant righteousness,<sup>87</sup> but that it can only be found in God's new saving action, Jesus' death and resurrection.

To sum up, Paul accuses his opponents of being κατατομή, not περιτομή, and says that he and his converts do not boast in the flesh. This indicates that Paul's opponents are very like those Jews who hold the conviction of "membership legalism". They believe that they can be saved by their membership of the covenantal community and therefore over-emphasize the significance of circumcision, because circumcision is the most important symbol of membership. Paul, however, disagrees with this conviction and claims that the function of circumcision is as a response to God's saving grace. It is not a means of obtaining salvation. What is important for salvation remains God's saving grace. Paul re-interprets God's saving grace as the new, saving action of Jesus' death. Henceforth, knowing, choosing and depending on this knowledge become integral to accepting this gift. Paul takes his own experience as an example. He possesses all the Jewish advantages, but when he faces the question of salvation, he finds that Jewish advantages have no function in attaining salvation. Consequently, he abandons this way and chooses the right way, that is, faith in Christ. In short, Paul insists that *a Jew, even possessing all Jewish advantages, needs faith in Christ in order to become a member of God's people.*<sup>88</sup>

### 2.2.2 The reasons

Paul argues that faith in Christ is the most important element for Jews to become God's people. The basic reason is that he regards the crucifixion of Christ as God's new act of saving grace. This is confirmed by Rom. 3:24f.:



δικαιούμενοι δωρεάν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι ...

The most important point in this passage is that Paul regards Jesus' crucifixion as (1) God's grace of redemption and (2) ἱλαστήριον.

Χάρις refers to God's action rather than God's attitude or God's being (*cf.* Zimmerli *TDNT* 9: 378). In the LXX, χάρις is used in the context of the Exodus three times (Ex. 3:21; 11:3; 12:36: καὶ ἔδωκε Κύριος τὴν χάριν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ ἐναντίον τῶν Αἰγυπτίων).<sup>89</sup> In Ex. 34:8-10, χάρις is used in the event of making the covenant:

Καὶ σπεύσας Μωυσῆς, κύψας ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν προσεκύνησε· καὶ εἶπεν, εἰ εὗρηκα χάριν ἐνώπιόν σου, συμπορευθήτω ὁ Κύριός μου μεθ' ἡμῶν· ὁ λαὸς γὰρ σκληροτράχηλός ἐστι· καὶ ἀφελεῖς σὺ τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν, καὶ τὰς ἀνομίας ἡμῶν, καὶ ἐσόμεθά σοι. Καὶ εἶπε Κύριος πρὸς Μωυσῆν, ἰδοὺ, ἐγὼ τίθημί σοι διαθήκην ἐνώπιον παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ σου ...<sup>90</sup>

It is, therefore, fair to suggest that χάρις in the Old Testament, at least in some of its uses, refers to God's grace in delivering Israel out of Egypt and in giving the covenant.

In Paul, χάρις often refers to God's saving action in Christ's crucifixion (*cf.* Conzelmann *TDNT* 9: 394; *idem* 1969: 213f.; Bultmann 1952: 289-292). For example, Rom. 5:15 (πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἢ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι τῇ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐπερίσσευσεν); 1 Cor. 1:4 (Εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ μου πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῇ χάριτι τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ δοθείσῃ ὑμῖν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ); Gal. 2:21 (Οὐκ ἀθετῶ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ· εἰ γὰρ διὰ νόμου δικαιοσύνη, ἄρα Χριστὸς δωρεάν ἀπέθανεν). In the present passage (Rom. 3:24f.), χάρις is connected with ἀπολυτρώσις τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ and with ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι. It is, then, fair to conclude that Paul regards God's saving grace in Jesus' death as equivalent to what God had done for Israel in the Exodus and in giving the covenant. In other words, Paul insists that salvation can come only through God's saving grace - through the Exodus and the giving of the covenant in the past, and through Christ's crucifixion now.



This concept can be supported by Paul's use of ἀπολύτρωσις in the same sentence. Ἀπολύτρωσις refers to the buying back of slaves, prisoners of war or criminals who are condemned to death. They are thereby made free on the payment of a ransom (cf. BAGD: 96 s.v.; Büchsel TDNT 4: 352). The noun ἀπολύτρωσις and the verb λυτροῦν in the LXX are often used to refer to God's redemption of Israel from Egypt or Babylon (cf. Sanday and Headlam 1902: 86; Dunn 1988: 169; Black 1989: 59; Ziesler 1989: 111). For example, Deut. 7:8:

Ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν Κύριον ὑμᾶς, καὶ διατηρῶν τὸν ὄρκον ὃν ὤμοσε τοῖς πατράσιν ὑμῶν, ἐξήγαγεν ὑμᾶς Κύριος ἐν χειρὶ κραταιᾷ, καὶ ἐλυτρώσατό σε Κύριος ἐξ οἴκου δουλείας, ἐκ χειρὸς Φαραὼ βασιλέως Αἰγύπτου. (cf. Ex. 6:6; 15:13; Deut. 9:26; 15:15; 21:8; 24:18; Pss. [all in LXX]: 24:22; 25:11; 30:6; 31:7).

Isa. 43:14:

Οὕτως λέγει Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ὁ λυτρούμενος ὑμᾶς, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, ἕνεκεν ὑμῶν ἀποστελῶ εἰς Βαβυλῶνα, καὶ ἐπεγερῶ φεύγοντας πάντας, καὶ Χαλδαῖοι ἐν πλοίοις δεθήσονται. (cf. Isa. 41:14; 43:1; 44:22-24; 51:11; 52:3; 62:12; 63:9).

On the other hand, redemption is connected with covenant in Ps. 110:9 (LXX):

Λύτρωσιν ἀπέστειλε τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ· ἐνετείλατο εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα διαθήκην αὐτοῦ.

Many commentators explain ἀπολύτρωσις in Rom. 3:24 as God's eschatological act of deliverance (cf. Käsemann 1980: 96; Black 1989: 59; Barrett 1991: 73). It is, however, more likely that ἀπολύτρωσις here is equivalent to the present participle δικαιοῦμενοι which is best understood as referring to the *present* situation - "God's saving righteousness gives people a new status as his own people" (Ziesler 1989: 111; cf. Dunn 1988: 168).<sup>91</sup> What Paul wants to emphasize by employing ἀπολύτρωσις is, possibly, the frequent understanding of the word in the Old Testament - God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt and Babylon. This emphasis echoes the usage of χάρις. It is, therefore, very likely that by using χάρις and ἀπολύτρωσις, Paul intends to draw his audience's attention to God's new act of saving grace in Jesus' death which is equivalent to what God had done in the Exodus and Restoration.

Then, Paul claims that Jesus' (death) is ἰλαστήριον. In Rom. 3:25, ἰλαστήριον very likely refers either (1) to the "mercy seat" of the ark which functions as the place<sup>of</sup> "expiation" (cf. Cranfield 1975: 214; Käsemann 1980: 97; Moo 1991: 233; Barrett 1991: 73f.; Ziesler 1989: 112f.; Herrmann *TDNT* 3: 319; Büchsel *TDNT* 3: 320; Meyer 1983: 198; Bultmann 1952: 46; Thornton 1968-9: 54);<sup>92</sup> or (2) to the "new Temple" mentioned in Ezek. 43 (cf. Kraus 1991: 260); or (3) to both simultaneously.

The "mercy seat" has three important functions in the Old Testament (cf. Herrmann *TDNT* 3: 318). First, the "mercy seat" is "the top (or lid) of the ark". The importance of the ark is emphasized by the statement, "in the ark you shall put the covenant that I shall give you" (Ex. 25:21). It is, therefore, fair to say that the "mercy seat" represents the covenant and the law. Furthermore, after Solomon built the Temple, the ark is placed in the Holy of Holies which is the heart of the Temple. The Temple is considered as the place where people pray and where Yahweh grants forgiveness and blessing (1 Kings 8:30: "Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place; O hear in heaven your dwelling place; heed and forgive"). Therefore, the "mercy seat" stands at the heart of the whole of Israelite religion - it represents the Temple, the covenant and the law.

Second, the "mercy seat" is the place where God meets Moses and makes his will known to him (Ex. 25:22: "There I will meet with you ... I will deliver to you all my commands for the Israelites"; Num. 7:89: "When Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with the Lord, he would hear the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat"). Moreover, Israel always held that the ark was the throne of Yahweh and that, wherever the ark was, Yahweh was fully present (cf. von Rad 1975: 237). Consequently, the "mercy seat" can be understood as representing God's presence and God's revelation, including the Temple, the covenant and the law.

Third, in the ritual of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16), the main events are these: (1) Yahweh appears "in the cloud upon the mercy seat" (v. 2) and (2) the main ritual of the Day of Atonement, the sin offering:<sup>93</sup> Aaron will "take some of the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle the blood with his finger seven times" (v. 14). Blood is essential for the expiation wrought by the sacrifice (*cf.* de Vaux 1964: 92f.; Lev. 17:11: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you for making atonement for your lives on the altar; for, as life, it is the blood that makes atonement"; Heb. 9:22: καὶ σχεδὸν ἐν αἵματι πάντα καθαρίζεται κατὰ τὸν νόμον καὶ χωρὶς αἱματεκχυσίας οὐ γίνεται ἄφεσις.; *b. Yoma* 5a: "no expiation except in blood"). The function of the Day of Atonement is, therefore, "to mediate the grace of God in forgiveness and redeeming action" (Rylaarsdam *IDB* 1: 316) for all Israelites (*cf.* Buchanan 1990: 238f., 243, 248f.; Eichrodt 1961: 98). It is evident that the "mercy seat" becomes the place where the sin offering takes place and expiation happens. This function is of cardinal importance for interpreting Paul's use of ἱλαστήριον in Rom. 3:25, because Paul mentions Jesus' blood here.

Jesus' blood is a "graphic phrase for the death of Christ in its soteriological significance" (Behm *TDNT* 1: 174). In Rom. 3:25, "by his blood" is connected with ἱλαστήριον.<sup>94</sup> What Paul has in mind is very likely that the function of Christ's blood is like the blood of the "sin offering" shed on the "mercy seat" on the Day of Atonement (*cf.* Campbell 1992: 133).<sup>95</sup> The main function of the "sin offering" is that "the victim would be laden with the sin of the offerer and would undergo the penalty that was due to him" (de Vaux 1964: 94; *cf.* von Rad 1975: 258; Dunn 1991: 44). If the "sin offering" is offered on the Day of Atonement, the object of expiation is the whole of Israel (*cf.* Buchanan 1990: 244).

Kraus, on the other hand, suggests that ἱλαστήριον should be understood not only as "mercy seat", but broadly as the new Temple in Ezek. 43 (*cf.* Kraus 1991: 260). In Ezek. 43:14, 17 and 20, ἱλαστήριον is not a portion of the ark, but

the ledge of an altar where burnt offerings were made (cf. Büchsel *TDNT* 3: 320; Ezek. 43:13f.: Καὶ ταῦτα τὰ μέτρα τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου ἐν πῆχει τοῦ πῆχεως ... καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ὕψος τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου ἐκ βάθους τῆς ἀρχῆς τοῦ κοιλώματος αὐτοῦ, πρὸς τὸ ἱλαστήριον τὸ μέγα τοῦτο ... καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἱλαστηρίου τοῦ μικροῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ἱλαστήριον τὸ μέγα, πῆχεις τέσσαρες, καὶ εὖρος πῆχυς). Ackroyd indicates that the theme of Ezek. 40-48 is the hope of restoration; it is elaborated in the descriptions of the new Temple in 40:1-43:12 and of the new cultus in 43:13-27 (cf. Ackroyd 1968: 110).

The most important feature of the new Temple is that it is Yahweh's dwelling-place and therefore reflects Yahweh's presence (cf. Ackroyd 1968: 110f.; Ezek. 43:7: "this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, where I will reside among the people of Israel forever"). Yahweh's presence and his dwelling among the people is significant, for when Ezekiel describes Israel as dead (Ezek. 37:1ff.: "... in the middle of a valley, it was full of bones ... and they were very dry"), it is because the "glory of God" had left the Temple (Ezek. 11:22f.: "Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. And the glory of the Lord ascended from the middle of the city, and stopped on the mountain east of the city"; cf. von Rad 1965: 234). The return of the "glory of God" (Ezek. 43:4: "As the glory of the Lord entered the temple by the gate facing east") and his dwelling among the people, therefore, symbolizes that the restoration had begun.

The main function of the restored cultus is to maintain the life of the community and to preserve its purity (cf. Ackroyd 1968: 112f.; Eichrodt 1961: 98-100; de Vaux 1964: 91). Thereby, Yahweh's salvation will also be restored. Ezek. 36:17-28:

"When the house of Israel lived on their own soil, they defiled it with their ways and their deeds; their conduct in my sight was like the *uncleanness* of a woman in her menstrual period. So I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land and for the idols with which they had defiled it. I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries; in accordance with their conduct and their deeds I judged them ... I will take you

from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be *clean* from all your *uncleannesses*, and from all your idols I will cleanse you ... Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God."

The last sentence, "you shall be my people and I shall be your God", is important, for it contains the old formula of the covenant; Ezekiel "is speaking of a saving appointment of Jahweh analogous to the making of the old covenant" (von Rad 1965: 235).

The fact that Paul, in Rom. 3:25, regards Jesus' death as the building of the "new Temple" is significant.<sup>96</sup> In making this connection, Paul claims that through his death, Christ has become the "new Temple", fulfilling the essential functions of the original one. Consequently, the old Temple is no longer necessary. Jesus' death has overtaken it.

To sum up, Paul regards Christ's death as χάρις, ἀπολύτρωσις and ἱλαστήριον in Rom. 3:24f. In the Old Testament, χάρις and ἀπολύτρωσις refer to God's saving grace in the Exodus and the Restoration. This saving grace is the most essential element in salvation. Paul now re-interprets God's saving grace as Christ's death. That means that *in the past, it was God's saving grace in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and from Babylon that provided salvation, but now it is God's new, saving grace in Christ's death that gives salvation*. Then, Paul goes much further and claims that Christ's death is ἱλαστήριον. In the Old Testament, ἱλαστήριον not only represents the most important parts of Israelite religion, the ark, the covenant, the Temple, the law and expiation on the Day of Atonement, but also denotes a "new Temple" which surpasses the value of the old system. Paul believes that Christ's death has already replaced, or at least fulfilled, what Jews regard as the most important in their religion.

These convictions enable Paul to consider the observance of the law as *optional* and to stress that what is essential for salvation is, indeed, Christ's death. Observance of the law is an *optional* life-style which is suitable, but not essential, for Jews to choose in response to God's saving grace (see [4.1.1] and [4.2]). This

is possibly the main difference between Paul and his opponents' attitude to the law: Paul's opponents regard the law as *essential*, while Paul regards it as *optional*; Paul's opponents claim that *both* faith *and* the law are equally important, while Paul maintains that *only* faith is essential and that the law is optional.

## NOTES

### (Chapter Two)

[1]. Sanders claims that Paul preaches directly to Gentiles, because "apart from Romans 16, we learn only about Gentile converts, and until Chapters 9-11 there is no reflection on the fate of the Jewish people" (1991: 19). O'Neill, further, maintains that Paul's aim in the mission was to set up pure Gentile congregations, separate from the Jewish congregations (cf. 1970: 118; 1975: 81). These suggestions, however, are difficult to explain Paul's saying in 1 Cor. 9:20: ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἵνα Ἰουδαίους κερδήσω. Furthermore, Rom. 9-11 is long enough to show Paul's extreme concern for his fellow Jews. They are nevertheless also his opponents. It is, therefore, not fair to expect Paul continually to show concern for them.

Watson, on the other hand, suggests that Paul preached the gospel only to Jews at the early stage of his mission and that he then turned to the Gentiles in response to the failure of his mission among the Jews (cf. 1986: 28-32). Watson takes 1 Cor. 9:20f. as evidence and says:

"It is much more likely that Paul is referring in v. 20 to the earliest days of his Christian commitment, in which he continued to live as a Jew and preached to Jews only, and that v. 21 describes his irrevocable break with the Jewish way of life when he began to think of himself as 'apostle to the Gentiles'. That would explain the use of the aorist tense rather than the present " (1986: 29).

Checking the Greek text, however, there is an aorist verb (ἐγενόμην) in v. 20a, but no verb in v. 21a (τοῖς ἀνόμοις ὡς ἄνομος). It is, therefore, hard to say that vv. 20 and 21 refer to two different times, i.e., that v. 20 refers to Paul's earlier days when he was working among Jews and that v. 21 refers to the present time when he is working among Gentiles. Furthermore, Paul uses ἐγενόμην again in v. 22a (ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν ἀσθενής) and uses a perfect tense γέγονα in v. 22c (τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα). It is, therefore, clear that Paul is using the past tense of γίνομαι throughout vv. 20-22. That means that the interpretation that all things happened at the same time cannot be excluded. When Paul concentrated on his mission to the Gentiles, he still preached to the Jews, if he got a chance.

[2]. Because it is not until 2:17 that Paul explicitly mentions that he is talking to Jews, it has been suggested that Paul's audience is both Jewish and Gentile in 2:1-16 (cf. Stowers 1981: 83, 112; Gaston 1987b: 120; Barrett 1991: 41; Carras 1992: 191). The majority of commentators, however, maintain that Paul is addressing Jews throughout Rom. 2 (cf. Cranfield 1975: 138; Käsemann 1980: 53-55; Black 1989: 44; Moo 1991: 125, 127; Ziesler 1989: 81; Watson 1986: 109; and the list in Stowers 1981: 214, fn. 15).

It is very likely that Jews are the *only* audience in Rom. 2. Although Paul mentions the Gentiles' fulfilment of the law, or τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νόμου in vv. 14f., 26f., his genuine purpose is simply "to expose the Jew as a transgressor of the law of which he so proud" (Räsänen 1987: 102).

[3]. In Gal. 2:7, what Paul and what Peter preach are described as "the gospel of uncircumcision" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας) and "the gospel of circumcision" ([τὸ εὐαγγέλιον] τῆς περιτομῆς) respectively. The question has been raised: are the gospels preached by Paul and by Peter different? Or, more precisely, does Peter preach a law-bound gospel to the Jews, while Paul preaches a law-free gospel to the Gentiles?



Bruce claims that Peter's gospel and Paul's gospel may have "different emphases and nuances", but that their gospels are not "different gospels" as Gal. 1:6-9 describes (1982: 120). As a result, εὐαγγέλιον ... τῆς περιτομῆς has to be understood as a gospel *for* the circumcised (i.e., the Jews), rather than as a gospel *of* circumcision (cf. *ibid.*). But Bruce does not explain what a gospel for the circumcised without circumcision might be. Fung also maintains that Paul's gospel and Peter's gospel are the same. The only difference between Paul's gospel and Peter's gospel is "the particular approach and emphasis appropriate to 'their specific audiences'" (1988: 98). Fung, however, does not indicate what "the particular approach and emphasis appropriate to" the Jews might be. Longenecker argues that the difference between Paul's gospel and Peter's gospel is not in content but in "audience and type of outreach" (1990: 55). Again, Longenecker does not explain what the different "types of outreach" to Jews and to Gentiles might be.

Each of these interpretations lacks clear definition of the "gospel of circumcision" and the "gospel of uncircumcision". For Paul, "gospel" refers to God's saving grace in Christ. This is the common foundation shared by both Paul and Peter. Therefore, the content of Paul's gospel and Peter's gospel is the same. When Paul talks about the "gospel of circumcision" and the "gospel of uncircumcision", however, what he has in mind is not the content of the gospel, but rather the *tactics* which are used to preach the gospel. Accordingly, Paul's gospel of uncircumcision refers to his way of preaching God's saving grace in Christ among the Gentiles, while Peter's gospel of circumcision refers to his way of preaching the same gospel among the Jews. If circumcision is the main issue of Galatians (cf. Räisänen 1987a: 406f.), then, it is fair to suggest that Peter's approach to preaching the gospel among the Jews is to allow them to continue to observe circumcision, while Paul's method is to preach the gospel among the Gentiles without asking them to undertake circumcision (cf. Burton 1921: 92; Räisänen 1987a: 407).

In v. 9, it is agreed that Paul and Barnabas should go to the Gentiles (εἰς τὰ ἔθνη) and that Peter and his colleagues should go to the circumcised (εἰς τὴν περιτομήν). Moreover, in v. 8, Paul recognizes Peter's law-bound missionary approach by saying that God works (ἐνεργέω) through Peter and makes him an apostle to the circumcised. Ἐνεργέω may refer to "God's redemptive activity as a whole" (Betz 1979: 98, fn. 392; cf. Bertram TDNT 2: 652-654). That is to say, Paul recognizes Peter's law-bound tactic to the Jews as one of God's saving actions. To be sure, Paul *does not prohibit Jews from observing the law*, but, on the contrary, maintains that allowing Jews to practise the law, here circumcision, is in accordance with God's saving plan.

[4]. Betz also points out that there are three conventional parts of the *peroratio*: (1) the *enumeratio* or *recapitulatio* (ἀνακεφαλαιώσεις) whose function is to sharpen and sum up the main points of the case; (2) the *indignatio* which arouses anger and hostility against the opponents; and (3) the *conquestio* which stimulates pity (cf. Betz 1979: 313).

[5]. This argument was first put forward by E. Hirsch, "Zwei Fragen zu Gal 6," ZNW 29 (1930) 192-197. Hirsch claims that οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι refer to Gentiles "who had yielded to the persuasion of the Judaizers: the task of keeping the whole law to which their circumcision had committed them was beyond their capacity, so they made up for their defective law-keeping by persuading other Gentile converts to be circumcised" (Bruce 1982: 269; cf. Betz 1979: 316, fn. 42).

[6]. This interpretation is confirmed by the context. Paul's main concern in Gal. 6:11-16 is circumcision. So, v. 12: Paul's opponents want to compel Galatians to be circumcised; v. 15: οὔτε περιτομή τί ἐστὶν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία. The most striking example is in v. 13, where Paul says that his opponents θέλουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, ἵνα ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ σαρκί καυχῶνται. To be circumcised is clearly equivalent to boasting in σὰρξ.

[7] Betz claims that "for Paul the 'cross of Christ' and the 'Law' are mutually exclusive as ways to salvation" (1979: 316). He also suggests that Paul's opponents did not preach the cross of Christ, or at least they "did not proclaim the cross in the same way Paul did" (1979: 315). Betz's evidence is Gal. 5:11 (*cf. ibid.*, fn. 36). However, Paul's opponents in Galatia are Christian Jews, not non-Christian Jews. What Christian Jews proclaim is the cross of Christ *and* circumcision, while Paul preaches the cross *without* circumcision (*cf. Räsänen 1986a: 251; idem 1987a: 409*). Therefore, Gal. 5:11 may be understood as "if I am still preaching circumcision *with* the gospel of the cross ...", thereby reflecting what his opponents proclaim.

[8]. Jewett says that:

"If they [*sc.* Paul's opponents] could succeed in *circumcising the Gentile Christians*, this might effectively thwart any Zealot purification campaign against the Judean Church ... The nomistic Christians in Judea would have ample reason to boast if they could induce the Gentile churches to enter the ranks of the circumcised, for such an achievement would release them from a mortal threat levelled against all who dared to associate themselves with the ungodly and the *uncircumcised*. It was this hope of public recognition for their loyalty to the Torah which lay behind Paul's bitter words: they wish to put up a good show in the flesh" (1971: 206, *my italics*).

[9]. In the LXX and rabbinic literature, "zeal" means "a specific intensity in the divine action", *i.e.*, God's zeal turns against the apostasy of Israel, because he is holy (*cf. Stumpff TDNT 2: 879*). There Phinehas is normally regarded as precedent and prototype of this godly zeal (*cf. Martin 1976: 128; O'Brien 1991: 375; 1 Macc. 2:23-26*). The story of Phinehas is described in Num. 25:6-13. The key word for understanding what is wrong with the Israelite whom Phinehas kills is *qubbā* in 25:8. This word occurs only here in the Old Testament. Sturdy claims that *qubbā* is probably "the inner room of the Tabernacle" (1976: 184) and that what is wrong with the Israelite whom Phinehas kills is the attempt "to introduce fertility rites into the pure worship of Israel" (1976: 184f.). Budd, however, disagrees with Sturdy's interpretation and suggests that *qubbā* is better understood as "a separate tent shrine" (1984: 280) and that because the shrine is alien, this may lead to apostasy just as intermarriage and intercourse with a foreign woman (*cf. ibid.*). Noth maintains that the meaning of *qubbā* is not clear. It could refer to "inner room", or "wedding room" (1968: 198). Therefore, what is wrong with the Israelite is having intercourse with a Midianite woman. This means "subjection to her god" and defiance of the cultic lament in v. 6b ("while they are weeping"; *cf. ibid.*). What Phinehas did was to stop the apostasy of the people (*cf. 1968: 199*). This is Phinehas' zeal.

In Num. 25:13, Phinehas received rewards because he was zealous for God. This idea is explained more fully in v. 11, where Phinehas' zeal is described as working on God's behalf. God's zeal means that he is "zealous to protect the due honour that should be paid" to himself (Sturdy 1976: 185; *cf. Budd 1984: 280*). Therefore, Phinehas' zeal means that he recognizes the characteristics of God's zeal and so sets out to put an end even by violence to the apostasy which has damaged the purity of the covenant community. This is perhaps also the zeal of Paul's opponents and pre-Christian Paul in persecuting the church: the proclamation of the church is apostasy and harmful to the community. Therefore, he is zealous in his attack on the church, in order to keep the community pure.

[10]. Longenecker claims that what Paul means here is that although the Judaizers highlighted the significance of circumcision, they "fell short of keeping all the law scrupulously themselves" (1990: 293). Betz maintains that Paul's opponents "would

insist on circumcision but would not observe the Torah" (1979: 316). Bertram says that Paul's opponents were zealous for the Law, but that they did not keep it (cf. TDNT 9: 241). It is, therefore, fair to conclude that Paul's opponents emphasized only circumcision, but paid no attention to the rest of the law.

[11]. Paul's tactic here is very similar to that of Amos. He too begins with a sharp condemnation of Israel's enemies (Am. 1:1-2:5) before he turns his critique on Israel (Am. 2:6-6:14; cf. Carras 1992: 190f.). Stowers, on the other hand, claims that this "sudden turning" of the object of criticism from one to the other is often used by classical philosophers ~~e.g., Epictetus and Dio Chrys,~~ to address a "fictitious interlocutor" (1981: 86, 93, 215f., fn. 41).

[12]. Both Dunn and Moo compare the lists described in Mk. 7:21-22 and Rom. 1:29-31 and then claim that Paul may mean that Jews are committing the same faults in Mk. 7:21f. as the Gentiles in Rom. 1:29-31 (cf. Dunn 1988: 80; Moo 1991: 130). Similarly, Barrett explains idolatry in Rom. 1:29 as "judging fellow-creatures" (cf. 1991: 42). It is, however, unlikely that Paul is making a precise list of the Gentiles in Rom. 1:29-31 and the use of the Jews in 2:21-23. This is simply because, neither every Gentile nor every Jew commits each of the sins listed in 1:29-31 and 2:21-23 and because, what some Gentiles and Jews commit are certainly more, or less, than the sins listed in 1:29-31 and 2:21-23. It is, therefore, fair to suggest that all the sins listed in 1:29-32 and 2:21-23 are *representative* of sins in general. Accordingly, when Paul says that Jews commit stealing and adultery, what he means is that Jews commit sins *such as* stealing, adultery and ... Similarly, when Paul rebukes Jews of their doing "the very same things", he means that Jews commit sins *just as* Gentiles do.

[13]. Watson tries to reconstruct Paul's opponents' argument by tracing back Paul's address in 2:1-11 as follows:

"The Jew whom Paul is addressing condemns the behaviour of the Gentiles (v. 1), and believes that God will ultimately confirm his opinion by passing judgment on them (v. 2). Yet the extraordinary thing is that the judge does exactly the same thing himself. He believes that despite this he will be exempted from God's condemnation (v. 3), because as a member of the covenant community he can rely on 'the riches of God's kindness and forbearance and patience' (v. 4). At the Judgment, God will bestow eternal life on the Jews (cf. vv. 7, 10, in opposition to this view), whereas Gentiles who do not have the law and circumcision will be condemned (opposed in vv. 8f.). At present, Jews must live in the world alongside Gentiles, but on the day when God's righteous judgment is revealed he will destroy his enemies and vindicate Israel. All this springs from the fact that he has chosen Israel out of all of the nations in order to bestow his love uniquely upon her (the view opposed by v. 11)" (1986: 110f.).

[14]. Käsemann claims that:

"Paul sees the world before and apart from Christ as divided by the *nomos*, he retains for it the historical depth which is set forth by the antithesis of Jew and Gentile ... Only with Christ as the end of the law does that humanization occur in which the distinction between Jew and Gentile exists only in memory" (1980: 52).

Käsemann is right when he indicates that Paul regards the law as the distinction between Jews and Gentiles. But in Rom. 2 Paul does not yet talk about faith in Christ.

Dunn suggests that:

"Paul is seeking to deny any false distinction between Jew and Gentile (vv. 9-10), and the law is introduced as providing just such a distinction

- Gentiles being characterized as those 'without the law,' 'not having the law' (vv. 12, 14), and Jews as those 'within the law,' 'hearers of the law' (vv. 12, 13). The point is that there is no advantage in merely having the law, that is, in belonging to the people who hear the law sabbath by sabbath" (1988: 95; cf. Ziesler 1989: 81).

[15]. Stowers defines the "diatribe" style of argument as "discourses and discussions in the school where the teacher employed the 'Socratic' method of censure and protreptic" (1981: 76). The goal of "diatribe" is "to transform the students to point out error and to cure it" (*ibid.*).

[16]. Stowers says:

"The four indicting rhetorical questions in 21 and 22 (sc. 2:21f.) each have a participial phrase which describes an activity of the interlocutor followed by a verb which poses a question to the interlocutor about his own participation in that activity.

|                           |                       |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| ὁ οὖν διδάσκων ἕτερον     | σεαυτὸν οὐ διδάσχεις; |
| ὁ κηρύσσων μὴ κλέπτειν    | κλέπτεις;             |
| ὁ λέγων μὴ μοιχεύειν      | μοιχεύεις;            |
| ὁ βδελυσσόμενος τὰ εἰδῶλα | ἱεροσυλεῖς;"          |

(1981: 97).

Stowers quotes a similar pattern of questions, with short statements about the opponent followed by short questions, from Seneca *Epistulae Morales* 77:18 (without translation):

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <i>Mortem times</i> | <i>at quomodo illam media boletatione contemnis?</i> |
| <i>Vivere vis</i>   | <i>scis enim?</i>                                    |
| <i>Mori times</i>   | <i>quid porro? Ista vita non mors est?</i>           |

(1981: 97).

[17]. Watson says:

"Rom. 2 is an attack not primarily on the Jewish community as a whole but on its teachers - i.e. its leaders. The Jew who is addressed condemns the behaviour of the Gentiles (vv. 1-3), and seeks to instruct them about 'the embodiment of knowledge and truth' which is to be found in the law (vv. 19f.)" (1986: 113).

[18]. E.g., *Ps. Sol.* 8:8-13:

"God exposed their (sc. people in Jerusalem) sins in the full light of day;

In secret places underground was their lawbreaking, provoking (him), son involved with mother and father with daughter;

Everyone committed adultery with his neighbor's wife;

they made agreements with them with an oath about these things.

They stole from the sanctuary of God as if there were no redeeming heir.

They walked on the place of sacrifice of the Lord, (coming) from all kinds of uncleanness;

and (coming) with menstrual blood (on them), they defiled the sacrifices as if they were common meat.

There was no sin they left undone in which they did not surpass the gentiles"

(*OPT* 2: 659).

And Testament of Levi 14:4-8:

"For what will all the nations do if you (sc. Levi's children) become darkened with impiety? You will bring down a curse on our nation, because you want to destroy the light of the Law which was granted to you for the enlightenment of every man, teaching commandments which



are opposed to God's just ordinances. You plunder the Lord's offerings; from his share you steal choice parts, contemptuously eating them with whores. You teach the Lord's commands out of greed for gain; married women you profane; you have intercourse with whores and adulteresses. You take gentile women for your wives and your sexual relations will become like Sodom and Gomorrah. You will be inflated with pride over your priesthood, exalting yourselves not merely by human standards but contrary to the commands of God. With contempt and laughter you will deride the sacred things" (*OTP* 1: 793).

[19]. In the Old Testament, stealing is normally connected with kidnap, a crime which carried the death penalty (Ex. 21:16f.; Deut. 24:7), while the punishment for the theft of property (Ex. 22:1-15) is a fine or the like (Ex. 21:37ff). This commandment, like the story of Joseph in Gen. 37:12-36, sought to prevent the theft and sale of Israelites outside the covenant community and the subsequent loss of their blessings. This is because once a man is sold to foreigners, particularly to Bedouin caravans which travel through the desert, the chance for him to return is very slim. Therefore, the man-thief is described as "the stealer of life" in Deut. 24:7. Even a century after the return from exile, Nehemiah has to take action on this very issue (Neh. 5:8; cf. Noth 1962: 166; Childs 1974: 423; Phillips 1973: 49f.; Preisker *TDNT* 3: 754).

[20]. Adultery can have a man or a woman as subject. The purposes of this prohibition are: (1) moral defence, to maintain the sanctity of marriage; (2) to protect the husband's property, as the wife is part of her husband's property in ancient Israel (Ex. 20:17; Deut. 5:21); (3) to make sure that the wife's child is her husband's, because the Israelites did not believe in life after death, but believe that a man's personality lives on in his children. Adultery is, therefore, treated as a "great sin" in Gen. 20:9 and as "great wickedness and sin against God" in Gen. 39:9 (cf. Noth 1962: 165; Childs 1974: 422; Phillips 1973: 49).

[21]. The commandment of circumcision is found in Gen. 17:9-14. Regarding the context, the section 17:1-8 mentions what God has done in making a covenant. Then, in vv. 9-14 the topic turns to the human side (v. 9: "For your part, you must keep my covenant" NEB and REB). What keeping the covenant means is immediately specified in terms of circumcision, which is obligatory for "Every male among you in every generation" (v. 12, NEB). Circumcision here serves as a sign and a witness of acceptance of the covenant, just as a human covenant is accompanied by an external sign which obliges the parties to keep the agreement (e.g., Gen. 31:44-48; cf. von Rad 1972: 200f.).

Circumcision was practised in the ancient Near East by many peoples. Normally it was practiced about the age of puberty or immediately preceding marriage. In Gen. 17, however, circumcision has been transferred from puberty to the eighth day after birth, to a time when one cannot make any decision for oneself. This suggests that the covenant relationship is something received, not something that depends on personal choice and decision (cf. Davidson 1979: 58). The most important element in this passage is that circumcision is a sign of the covenant between God and the chosen people (v. 11).

Gen. 17:9-14 belongs to the P document which was formed during the Exile period. When the Israelites were exiled to Babylon, all visible symbols of their religion and nationhood were abolished. These include the temple, the sacrificial system, Jerusalem and the dynasty. What the Israelites could do in the Babylonian exile in order to distinguish themselves from the Babylonians was to observe circumcision (and the sabbath), because the Babylonians did not practise circumcision. Accordingly, circumcision gave them new religious and national identity and served as a visible and ineradicable mark demonstrating the fact that a man belonged to God's chosen community, Israel.

Another development of circumcision in the Exilic period was a spiritualized interpretation of it. This included circumcision of the heart (Deut. 30:6; 10:16; Jer. 4:4; 9:25f.; Ezek. 44:7) and of the ear (Jer. 6:10). During the Maccabean crisis, circumcision served as a test of covenant loyalty and a mark of Jewish national distinctiveness (cf. Dunn 1988: 119; 1 Macc. 1:60f.; 2 Macc. 6:10). During that time, only circumcised males were counted as belonging to the people of the covenant (cf. Dunn 1988: 119f.)

[22]. *Jub.* 15:25-34:

"... it [sc. circumcision] is an eternal ordinance ordained and written in the heavenly tablets. And anyone who is born whose own flesh is not circumcised on the eighth day is not from the sons of the covenant which the Lord made for Abraham since (he is) from the children of destruction. And there is therefore no sign upon him so that he might belong to the Lord because (he is destined) to be destroyed and annihilated from the earth and to be uprooted from the earth because he has broken the covenant of the Lord our God ... And you command the sons of Israel and let them keep this sign of the covenant for the generations for an eternal ordinance. And they will not be uprooted from the land because the commandment was ordained for the covenant so that they might keep it forever for all of the children of Israel ... But he chose Israel that they might be a people for himself. And he sanctified them and gathered them from all of the sons of man because (there are) many nations and many people, and they all belong to him ... And now I shall announce to you that the sons of Israel will deny this ordinance and they will not circumcise their sons according to all of this law ... And great wrath from the Lord will be upon the sons of Israel because they have left his covenant and have turned aside from his words. And they have provoked and blasphemed inasmuch as they have not done the ordinance of this law because they have made themselves like the gentiles to be removed and be uprooted from the land. And there is therefore for them no forgiveness or pardon so that they might be pardoned and forgiven from all of the sins of this eternal error" (*OTP* 2: 87).

[23]. Barrett claims that:

"The Jew would reply to Paul that the contrast he implies, between circumcision and 'practising the law', is unreal; circumcision is part of the law, and you cannot 'practise the law' without being circumcised. But for Paul, 'doing the things which the law requires' does not mean carrying out the detailed precepts written in the Pentateuch, but fulfilling that relation with God to which the law points ... a relation not of legal obedience but of faith" (1991: 55).

Similarly, Cranfield explains νόμον πράσσειν as:

"not a perfect fulfilment of the radical demands of the law, but a real faith in God and the serious engagement with obedience which springs therefrom" (1975: 171, fn. 3).

According to the context of Rom. 2, however, it is Paul's opponents, not Paul himself, who divide the law in two and keep circumcision only, but ignore the rest of the law. It is, therefore, not necessary to interpret νόμον πράσσειν in terms of faith. What Paul wants to emphasize is the keeping of the law as a whole - circumcision *and* the rest of the law. Therefore, Ziesler's suggestion is possibly correct. He says that:

"The present passage [sc. Rom. 2:25a] is directed against any who think these (sc. circumcision and the whole of the law) can be separated, and suppose that by itself circumcision has some kind of apotropaic power.

On the contrary, it has meaning only when it genuinely represents the will to obey the Law as a whole" (1989: 93).

[24]. Paul's usage of παραβάτης is very different from secular Greek usage. In secular Greek, παραβάτης mostly means "companion" or "helper" and rarely refers to a "transgressor". In military usage, it denotes the warrior who stands in a chariot beside the charioteer or the foot-soldier set among the cavalry to seize and mount horses whose riders have fallen (cf. Schneider TDNT 5: 740f.). Paul, however, uses it in Rom. 2:25, 27 to indicate "one who transgresses a specific divine commandment" (TDNT 5: 741). The term also occurs in Gal. 2:18: εἰ γὰρ ἃ κατέλυσα ταῦτα πάλιν οἰκοδομῶ, παραβάτην ἑμαυτὸν συνιστάνω. In this case, παραβάτης means "violator of the law" or "law-breaker". It has to do not just with breaking a specific statute of the law, but with setting aside the law's real intent (cf. Longenecker 1990: 91).

[25]. Dunn understands Sanders' concept of "covenantal nomism" as a doctrine of Jewish national identity, marking out Jews from the Gentiles as God's people (cf. Dunn 1990e: 242-244). "Covenantal nomism" is, in Dunn's usage, equivalent to Dunn's own concept, "the social function of the works of the law" (cf. 1990d: 216-219; 1990e: 244). Dunn's interpretation, however, is different from Sanders' own description. According to Sanders, "covenantal nomism" may be characterised as follows:

- "(1) God has chosen Israel and
- (2) given the law. The law implies both
- (3) God's promise to maintain the election and
- (4) the requirement to obey.
- (5) God rewards obedience and punishes transgression.
- (6) The law provides for means of atonement, and atonement results in
- (7) maintenance or re-establishment of the covenantal relationship.
- (8) All those who are maintained in the covenant by obedience, atonement and God's mercy belong to the group which will be saved.

An important interpretation of the first and last points is that election and ultimately salvation are considered to be by God's mercy rather than human achievement" (1977: 422).

Gundry, however, claims that Palestinian Judaism is much more "centered on works-righteousness" than Sanders suggests (cf. 1985: 5-8, 37f.). Similarly Barclay maintains that "the way the religion *worked in practice* and *was perceived* by its adherents may have been much more 'legalistic' than its official theology suggests" (1986: 8, his italics). It is very likely that what Sanders' "covenantal nomism" describes is the "official doctrine" of Judaism. The practice of daily life, however, may have been, and probably was, much more legalistic than the "official doctrine". According to Rom. 2, the situation which Paul meets is that Jews practise circumcision, but break the rest of the law. This is certainly not "covenantal nomism".

[26]. Hooker disagrees with Sanders' sharp distinction between the "participationism" of Paul's religion and the "covenantal nomism" of Palestinian Judaism and claims that it is Paul's religion that should be counted as a pattern of "covenantal nomism" (cf. 1982: 47-56). The reason is, according to Hooker, that Paul regards salvation and justification as wholly given by grace and that Paul asks everyone who has entered the new covenant to respond to this covenant by rendering the "obedience of faith" (cf. *ibid.*). That is to say, Paul's teaching follows the typical pattern of "covenantal nomism": (1) one is saved by God's grace and (2) one has to respond to this grace by doing something. In the context of Rom. 2, "one" refers to a Jew and "doing something" means obeying the whole law.



[27]. The main reference to the Jewish doctrine that Jews can be saved by their membership of the covenant community is *Sanhedrin* 10:1:

"All Israelites have a share in the world to come. And these are they that have no share in the world to come: he that says that there is no resurrection of the dead prescribed in the Law, and [he that says] that the Law is not from Heaven, and an Epicurean" (*cit.* Sanders 1977: 147; Cranfield 1975: 355; *idem* 1979: 577, my italics).

Sanders says, in his summary of the section, "salvation by membership in the covenant and atonement" (which includes the study of *Sanhedrin* 10:1) that:

"the overall pattern of Rabbinic religion ... is this: God has chosen Israel and Israel has accepted the election. In his role as King, God gave Israel commandments which they are to obey as best they can. Obedience is rewarded and disobedience punished ... As long as he (*sc.* the Israelite) maintains his desire to stay in the covenant, he has a share in God's covenantal promises, including life in the world to come. The intention and effort to be obedient constitute the *condition for remaining in the covenant*, but they do not *earn it*" (1977: 180, his italics).

Moore also explains *Sanhedrin* 10:1 as follows:

"A lot in the World to come' ... is ultimately assured to every Israelite on the ground of the original election of the people by the free grace of God ... [It] is not wages earned by works, but is bestowed by God in pure goodness upon the members of his chosen people" (1927-30: 2.95).

It is, therefore, fair to suggest that salvation by membership of the covenantal community is one of the main beliefs of Judaism.

[28]. Paul's mind in Rom. 2:25-29 runs like this:

(CN = "covenantal nomism"; ML = "membership legalism")

v. 25

valid περιτομή = περιτομή + νόμον πράσσειν [CN]

ἀκροβυστία = περιτομή + νόμου παραβάτης

= περιτομή - νόμον πράσσειν [ML]

v. 26

ἀκροβυστία + τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νομοῦ φυλάσσειν = περιτομή [CN]

v. 27

ἡ ἐκ φύσεως ἀκροβυστία + τὸν νόμον τελεῖν [CN] >

γράμμα + περιτομή + παραβάτης νόμου [ML]

∴ γράμμα = περιτομή + παραβάτης νόμου [ML]

v. 28

Ἰουδαῖος is not φανερός = περιτομή is not φανερά + ἐν σαρκί

= not περιτομή ἐν σαρκί

= περιτομή καρδίας (v. 29) [CN]

περιτομή ἐν σαρκί = περιτομή + παραβάτης νόμου [ML]

∴ περιτομή καρδίας = περιτομή + νόμον πράσσειν [CN]

v. 29

Ἰουδαῖος = κρυπτός [CN]

περιτομή καρδίας = πνεῦμα

= οὐ γράμμα [CN]

∴ πνεῦμα stands in opposition to γράμμα

γράμμα = περιτομή + παραβάτης νόμου (v. 27) [ML]

πνεῦμα = περιτομή + νόμον πράσσειν [CN]

[29]. These terms are generally interpreted without reference to Rom. 2. For example, Cranfield explains τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νομοῦ φυλάσσειν as: "not a perfect fulfilment of the law's demands ... but a grateful and humble *faith* in God and the life turned in the direction of obedience which is its fruit" (1975: 173, my italics). Cranfield also claims that τὸν νόμον τελεῖν has the same sense as τὰ δικαιώματα τοῦ νομοῦ φυλάσσειν (*cf.* 1975: 174).

Käsemann understands ἐν σαρκί as "the bodily sphere as the generally accessible and present concretion of the visible" (1980: 75). Barrett claims that "outward Jews" refers to "the Jew marked by 'works of the law,' who externalizes his religion and esteems his membership of the people of God as a visible privilege which he can parade before the world", while the "real Jew" means one who "is distinguished not by outward signs but by an inward obedience, virtually identical with the obedience of faith ... what the law really requires ... is faith" (1991: 57). Käsemann recognizes the "real Jew" to<sup>be</sup> a Christian (cf. 1971a: 144).

Most commentators connect περιτομή καρδίας with Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4; 9:25f.; Ezek. 44:7; *Jub.* 1:23. Ziesler explains the phrase as "synonymous with being a Jew inwardly, with having an inner commitment to God and to his will" (1989: 93). Barrett suggests that it means "man's humble response to God's gracious love and election" (1991: 58). Cranfield maintains that περιτομή καρδίας is "not accomplished by the mere fulfilment of the letter of the law's requirement, but is a miracle, the work of God's Spirit" (1975: 175). Käsemann understands the circumcision of the heart from the point of view of eschatology and defines it as "a real and not 'spiritualized' circumcision performed by the spirit, which leaves behind the sphere of the letter, with its validity and power, and is contrasted with it" (1971a: 145; cf. 1980: 75).

The meanings of and the contrast between γράμμα and πνεῦμα have attracted a lot of discussion. Most scholars define γράμμα as the Mosaic law in written form which belongs to the old covenant (cf. Käsemann 1971a: 140-144; *idem* 1980: 76; Westerholm 1984: 239-241; Schneider 1953: 207; Ziesler 1989: 93; Moo 1991: 172), while πνεῦμα is widely understood as the Holy Spirit (cf. Schneider 1953: 207; Ziesler 1989: 93; Moo 1991: 171), or "the divine agent of renewal and enabler of a life acceptable to God" (Dunn 1988: 124; cf. Westerholm 1984: 241).

Each of these interpretations is hard to fit into the context of Rom. 2. For example, γράμμα refers to the Mosaic law which is rejected by Paul. In Rom. 2, however, Paul does not oppose the law; on the contrary, he accuses Jews of breaking the law and furthermore asks them to obey the whole of Mosaic law. We should, therefore, understand these terms in the light of the specific context of Rom. 2. One should interpret γράμμα, for example, as obeying circumcision *only*, that is, according to the "membership legalism" of Paul's opponents. Similarly, one should interpret πνεῦμα as obeying the whole law according to Paul's "covenantal nomism".

[30]. Some scholars try to harmonize the tension between Rom. 2 and Paul's doctrine of "justification by faith". Pregeant maintains that the theme of Rom. 2 is "judgment by deeds". He says:

"To be justified is to enter into a restored relationship, precisely by virtue of this faith, and to receive the power such relationship brings. But one is also in every moment judged in terms of the extent to which the new life is actualized in deeds of love" (1979: 91).

Similarly, Snodgrass maintains that "judgment according to works" is the presupposition of "justification by faith" (cf. 1986: 86). Paul, according to Snodgrass, regards the new revelation in Christ as the beginning of the vindication of God. Paul proclaims this revelation in order to bring about the "obedience of faith". That is to say, both faith and obedience are important: "God acted decisively in Christ and people are incorporated into him by believing obedience" (1986: 87). Both Pregeant and Snodgrass make a distinction between "justification by faith" and "judgment by deeds". But Paul clearly uses δικαίω in Rom. 2:13, so the distinction must be made between "justification by faith" and "justification by deeds". Ziesler suggests that what Rom. 2 talks about is:

"how things are without the grace of God in Christ ... there are no privileges, no special cases. Without that grace in Christ, both Jew and Gentile have to produce good and obedient living in order to satisfy God" (1989: 84).

Impartiality is clearly one of the main points Paul makes in Rom. 2. However, Paul holds this principle not only in Rom. 2, but also in Rom. 3:21-31 which deals with "the grace of God in Christ". Moreover, Paul does not think that one can satisfy God by doing good. This is so-called "legalism". What Paul has in mind is not legalism, rather "covenantal nomism" which regards doing good as a response to grace. Therefore, if 2:6 is taken in the context of Rom. 2, what Paul means is that as a Jewish Christian, one has to do good *as well as* keep circumcision, in order to respond to God's saving grace properly.

Carras indicates that Rom. 2 is an "inner Jewish debate" between Paul and his opponents on "the nature of the Jewish religion": how does God judge? Paul's opponents believe that God carries out his judgment according to two different standards which depend on race. Paul, of course, disagrees with this claim (cf. 1992: 185, 188f., 206; Ziesler 1989: 81: Rom. 2 was originally a "synagogue sermon"). Impartiality is certainly *one* of the main points in Rom. 2, but not the only one. In fact, it is the antithesis between Paul's "covenantal nomism" and his opponents' "membership legalism" that is the most important point in Rom. 2. The purpose of the theme of impartiality is to encourage Jews to understand that God will treat Jews and Gentiles equally. The people of the covenant have to fulfil the requirement of "covenantal nomism".

Watson sees Rom. 1-11 as the "theoretical legitimation" of the Christians' separation from the synagogue (cf. 1986: 107). The methods Paul uses in order to carry out this "theoretical legitimation" are denunciation (Rom. 2), antithesis (Rom. 3) and reinterpretation (Rom. 4; cf. 1986: 45-48, 106-142). As a result, in Rom. 2 we see Paul's radical denunciation of membership of the Jewish community (cf. 1986: 119). Paul's purpose is to persuade Roman Jewish Christians to "abandon the remaining ties that bind them as a (failed) reform-movement to the Jewish community, and to join with his own followers in sectarian separation" (1986: 122). Watson's suggestion seems to indicate that the one whom Paul accuses is the non-Christian Jew rather than the Christian Jew. Contrary to Watson, however, Paul's accusation of "membership legalism" is directed against Jewish Christians and his "covenantal nomism" is proclaimed in the context not of the Jewish, but of the Christian community. Paul would never say that keeping the whole law is enough for salvation. Paul always insists that faith in Christ is also necessary for Jewish Christians (cf. [2.2.1]). In Rom. 2, what Paul means is that as a Jewish Christian, faith is essential and that as regards the response of faith, one cannot keep circumcision only, but must practise the rest of the law as well.

Some scholars argue that Rom. 2 is not written by Paul. O'Neill treats the whole of 1:18-2:29 as a long insertion added later, because (1) the argument is hard to fit into the train of thought begun in 1:1-17; (2) this passage has no reflection on Paul's problem - "even the Jew who conscientiously keeps the Law fails in the end to attain the righteousness acceptable to God, fails to become a truly righteous man"; and (3) there are many terms which scarcely appear in the rest of the Pauline epistles (cf. 1975: 41, 53, 58). Sanders regards Rom. 2 as an "appendix", because Rom. 2 "makes salvation dependent on obedience to the law" which "cannot be fitted into a category otherwise known from Paul's letters" (1983: 132). It is noteworthy, however, that Sanders *did not* think that there is any problem in interpreting Rom. 2 in his previous work (cf. 1977: 515-518 with the title "Judgment by works and salvation by grace"). There he said:

"the distinction between being judged on the basis of deeds and punished or rewarded at the judgment (or in this life), on the one hand, and being saved by God's gracious election, on the other, was the general view in Rabbinic literature. It is a very straightforward distinction, and it should occasion no surprise when it meets us in Paul. Salvation by grace is not incompatible with punishment and reward for deeds" (cit. 1977 [third printing 1987, Sanders does not change his statement]: 517, his italics, my underlinings).

Sanders explains Rom. 2 as follows:

"When the question concerns righteousness as the goal of religion, Paul insists that Christians *have been* justified by faith in Christ. In the context of Rom. 2, however, Paul is arguing that Jews and Gentiles stand on an equal footing before God. This applies even to the day of judgment, when those, whether Jews or Gentiles, who have in fact sinned will be punished (as the result of the accusation of their deeds), while those who have not will escape punishment (be excused or 'justified'). Righteousness or being justified here has to do with whether or not one is punished on the day of judgment, and the term has here that forensic/eschatological meaning which Bultmann thinks it characteristically has. Once we see that here the righteousness terminology refers to the question of *punishment*, and not to whether or not one is *saved* (which is its more usual meaning in Paul), the difficulty vanishes; for Paul elsewhere mentions punishment according to deeds" (1977: 516, his italics).

What Paul says in Rom. 2, however, is, in my opinion, not really contradictory with what is said in the rest of the Pauline epistles, e.g., Gal. 2:16 (οὐ δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ... ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ); Rom. 3:21-31 (Νυνὶ δὲ χωρὶς νόμου ...); Rom. 4:5 (τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐργαζομένῳ πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιούντα τὸν ἁσεβῆ λογίζεται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ εἰς δικαιοσύνην). The different argumentation in these passages and Rom. 2 is due to very different contexts, which persuade Paul to use different tactics. Rom. 4:5 deals with Gentiles. In both Rom. 3:21-31 and Gal. 2:16 Gentiles are included in the argument. In the next chapter of this thesis, I will discuss how Paul insists that the law is not necessary for Gentiles to become God's people. In Rom. 2, however, Jews are the only audience and Paul always encourages them to obey the law. It is noteworthy that Paul, in Rom. 2, only says "justification by the law" and does not say "justification *not* by faith". This suggests that "justification by the law" and "justification by faith" are not mutually exclusive. Both are necessary for Jewish Christians. Paul only mentions "justification by the law" and not "justification by faith" in Rom. 2, because he is fighting against "membership legalism" and arguing for "covenantal nomism".

[31]. Judgment, or justification, by doing something is not unusual in the Old Testament (e.g., Ps. 62:11f.; cf. the list in Cranfield 1975: 146), in Judaism (e.g., *Aboth* 1:17; cf. Snodgrass 1986: 90, fn. 38), in the New Testament outside the Pauline epistles (e.g., Mt. 16:27; Jas. 1:22-25; cf. the lists in Cranfield 1975: 146 and Snodgrass 1986: 74) and in the Pauline epistles (e.g., Gal. 6:7-10; 1 Cor. 3:13-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; 9:6; 11:15). *Aboth* 1:17:

"not the expounding [of the Law] is the chief thing but the *doing* [of it]; and he that multiplies words occasions sin" (*cit.* Cranfield 1975: 154, fn. 4, my italics).

[32]. The verb, δικαιόω, used in both 2:13 and 3:20, is in the future tense with the passive voice: δικαιωθήσονται and δικαιωθήσεται. This very likely refers to the verdict given by God at the Last Judgment (cf. Ziesler 1989: 86; Cranfield 1975: 154; Barrett 1991: 48; Käsemann 1980: 62; Dunn 1988: 97; Moo 1991: 144).

[33]. Snodgrass treats the three statements (Gal. 5:6; 6:15; 1 Cor. 7:19) together and interprets them as follows:

"What counted for Paul was that which the gospel accomplished. Being a new creation for Paul meant a life of faith working through love, and outside the context of the debate over 'works righteousness', this could even be described as a life of keeping the commandments of God" (1986: 86).

Gal. 5:6 and 6:15 belong to the same context, therefore, they can be read together. 1 Cor. 7:19, however, is in a different context. It is best interpreted separately.



[34]. Cf. Conzelmann, who claims that "to be a Jew is to be under the Law" (1975: 160). Also Robertson and Plummer interpret 1 Cor. 9:20 as: "to those under the Mosaic Law I became one of them" (1911: 191).

[35]. This view is taken by Cranfield, Dunn and Grosheide. Cranfield claims that in the context of Rom. 6:14, ὑπὸ νόμον refers to "the thought of labouring ... under the illusion with regard to the law that a man has to earn a status of righteousness before God by his obedience" (1975: 320). Dunn points out that because the Jews "have treated the law in effect as a spiritual power appointed by God to be as it were their national guardian angel", ὑπὸ νόμον "characterizes the form of life under the old age as it has been experienced within Judaism" (1988: 339). Grosheide interprets the men under the law as "those who are actually subject to the law of Moses and who observe it" (1953: 213).

[36]. It is generally agreed that Paul says in 1 Cor. 9:20 that he will practise the law when he meets Jews. Fee claims that Paul has "no problem with Jews continuing such practices" (1987: 428). Bruce maintains that although Paul is a Christian, "he continued to follow Jewish ways in Jewish company" and that "in the company of Jews who confined themselves to *kosher* meat, for example, he did the same" (1971: 86f., his italics). Robertson and Plummer translate ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαῖος by "I behaved to the Jews as a Jew, e.g., in circumcising Timothy at Lystra" (1911: 191). Grosheide declares that Paul observes the law at many points, because he "does not consider it a sin to observe the law" (1953: 212). Conzelmann claims that Paul "is able as a Jew to practise Jewish customs ... And he does not have to deliver the Jews from their practice of the Law, but from their 'confidence' in the Law as a way of salvation ... Accordingly the agreement in Gal. 2, that Jewish Christians are to continue to keep the Law, is not a compromise, but a direct application of the *sola fide*" (1975: 160). Bornkamm states that "the fact that for him [Paul] obedience to the Jewish ritual law was no longer obligatory did not in the least imply his prohibition of any observance of the law among Jews" (1971: 100).

It is, therefore, fair to conclude that when Paul is in the company of Jews, he practises the law.

[37]. The view adopted in this thesis finds support from the following scholars. Bruce indicates that "Paul's conformity with their practice was completely voluntary, his aim was to win those under the law" (1971: 87). Conzelmann maintains that Paul "is able as a Jew to practice Jewish customs, without teaching that the Law is a way of salvation" (1975: 160). Fee says that Paul "had no problem with Jews continuing such practices, as long as they were not considered to give people right standing with God" (1987: 428). Grosheide asserts that "the Jews are under obligation to observe the law because God commanded them to do so. With a view to such people Paul has imposed restrictions upon himself. Yet he was not bound to obey the law, he obeyed it voluntarily" (1953: 213).

[38]. An essentially similar position is taken up by Fee, who claims that 1 Cor. 9:20 is a special piece of "rhetoric designed to defend his own past actions": his "differing conduct in Jewish and Gentile settings" (1987: 427). Fee also indicates that "when he [Paul] was among Jews he was kosher; when he was among Gentiles he was non-kosher", because "neither mattered to God" (*ibid.*).

[39]. Two stories in Acts are often used to support Paul's observance of the law. They are Paul's circumcision of Timothy in Acts 16:1-3 and Paul's participation in the purification rite in the Temple in Acts 21:23-26.

Paul's circumcision of Timothy seems to be contrary to his normal attitude to circumcision, especially in view of his refusal to circumcise Titus in Gal. 2:3 (ὅλλ'.

οὐδε Τίτος ὁ σὺν ἐμοί, Ἕλλην ὢν, ἠναγκάσθη περιτεμεῖσθαι), if that is what did happen on that occasion. Neil seems to be right to solve this problem by distinguishing the pure Gentile Titus from the half-Gentile Timothy (cf. 1973: 178; Bruce 1990: 352). Timothy can be regarded as a Jew according to rabbinic law (*m. Bik.* 1:4: "... But if his mother was an Israelite he may bring them and make the avowal"; *cit.* Lüdemann 1989: 175). Therefore Paul's circumcising of Timothy is in accordance with the law (cf. Haenchen 1971: 481).

But why does Paul circumcise a Christian? There are two possible reasons. Neil claims that "although he [Paul] hotly contended for the right of Gentiles to become members of the Church without circumcision, he never at any point suggested that Jews were free from their obligations to the Law" (1973: 178). The other possible reason is διὰ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους τοὺς ὄντας ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἐκεῖνοις. Hengel points out that Paul normally began his Gentile mission with God-fearers in the synagogue. As a result, if he had taken an uncircumcised Jew, Timothy, with him, "Paul would have supported apostasy and would no longer have been allowed to appear in any synagogue" (1979: 64; cf. Bruce 1990: 352; Lüdemann 1989: 173). If Acts 16:1-3 is reliable, it is further evidence that Paul not only allows the Jews to continue to observe the law, including circumcision, after becoming Christians, but that he also himself undertakes it.

The rite εὐχή is normally regarded as the Nazirite vow described in Num. 6 (cf. Neil 1973: 219; Bruce 1990: 446; Haenchen 1971: 610, fn. 1). It is difficult to say whether εὐχή and ἀγνίζεσθαι indicate two rites or one rite. According to the present passage, they seem to be the same rite. But the minimum period of εὐχή is 30 days (*m. Nazir* 6:3: "A Nazirite vow that is vowed without a fixed duration is binding for 30 days"; *cit.* Bruce 1990: 446), not 7 days (Acts 21:27: Ὡς δὲ ἔμελλον αἱ ἑπτὰ ἡμέραι συντελεῖσθαι). Haenchen tries to reconstruct what was going on as follows:

"at that time there were four poor Nazirites in the Jerusalem Christian community. The period of their Nazirate had already elapsed. The expense, which they could not afford, was to be assumed by Paul ... Since Paul had come from abroad, he was however considered as levitically unclean. He had therefore first to regain levitical purity by a purification ritual. This consisted of being sprinkled with the water of atonement on the third and seventh day after reporting to the priest ... Paul accordingly, when he had accepted the proposal of the elders, went with the four Nazirites to the Temple and there reported first his own purification (ἀγνίζεσθαι) and secondly the ἐκπλήρωσις τῶν ἡμερῶν τοῦ ἀγνισμοῦ ... The date could then be fixed on which the appropriate sacrifices - for which Paul paid - were to be presented: it was the seventh day, on which he himself was to be cleared from guilt" (1971: 612).

To pay the expenses of sacrifices for poor persons was regarded as piety (cf. Neil 1973: 219f.; Lüdemann 1989: 234; Bruce 1990: 447). For example, Herod Agrippa I paid for many Nazirites in order to win favour with the Jews (cf. *Jos. Ant.* 19: 294; Neil 1973: 220; Bruce 1990: 447). Luke's purpose in describing this event is probably to demonstrate that Paul is "a law-abiding Jew" (Haenchen 1971: 610).

[40]. Gen. 17:11 (LXX) describes God's commandment regarding circumcision as: Καὶ περιτεμήσεσθε τὴν σάρκα τῆς ἀκροβυστίας ὑμῶν, καὶ ἔσται εἰς σημεῖον διαθήκης ἀνὰ μέσον ἐμοῦ καὶ ὑμῶν. Σημεῖον is used also in Rom. 4:11. This suggests that Paul very likely has Gen. 17:11 in mind when he writes Rom. 4. Gen. 17:11 and 17:14 speak of circumcising the σάρξ of the foreskin. As a result, when Paul says κατὰ σάρκα, he very likely has circumcising the σάρξ of the foreskin in mind.

[41]. Hübner suggests that on another similar occasion, namely Gal. 3, Paul's opponents could argue from Gen. 17 and say that:

"if you Galatians, in order to be Christians, wish to be sons of Abraham, that is, if for the sake of being Christians, you wish to participate in the covenant of Abraham, you must get yourselves circumcised" (1984: 51).

Sanders also tries to reconstruct what Paul's opponents might say to Paul's converts as follows:

"When Paul was here, did he say that he represents the God of Israel and that Jesus is God's designated Messiah?"

"Yes."

"Did he say that Jesus' coming was in accord with the Scripture, and that Scripture reveals God's will and intention?"

"Yes, he quoted to us from the Holy Books, and we have begun to study them."

"Do you know that those who accept Jesus as God's Messiah have committed themselves to obeying the ordinances of God as revealed to Israel in Scripture?"

"Well, Paul did not put it quite that way. But we do see the logic of the position. God sent Jesus and God also inspired the Holy Books, and if we accept one it is certainly reasonable that we accept the other."

"Have you read Genesis 17 lately?"

"No, ..."

"Genesis 17 expressly stipulates that all descendants of Abraham - that is, all who follow the ordinances of the God of Israel - are to be circumcised; rather, that the males are to be circumcised. Further, it clearly says that those who are not circumcised will be *cut off* from membership in the covenant between God, Abraham, and his descendants."

"Well, if that is the case we shall of course be circumcised. We would like a chance to study the matter, and we shall write to Paul to tell him what we are now considering" (1991: 54f., his italics).

Both Hübner and Sanders have imagined how the dialogue between Paul and his opponents might have gone. That Abraham undertook circumcision (Gen. 17) after having been reckoned as righteous (Gen. 15:6) was no doubt a good reason for his opponents to highlight the significance of circumcision. The only thing Paul could do in response was emphasizing the supreme importance of faith by means of arguing that Abraham's faith preceded his circumcision, rather than ignore the importance of circumcision altogether.

[42]. Apart from the meaning, "sign", σημεῖον also denotes "a wonder or a miracle, an event that is contrary to the usual course of nature" (BAGD: 748 s.v. 2). It is likely that Paul has God's miraculous power in salvation history in mind when he uses σημεῖον.

In 1 Cor. 1:22, Paul says Ἰουδαῖοι σημεῖα αἰτοῦσιν. Fee defines σημεῖα here as "miraculous signs", referring to "Jewish messianic expectations", that is, "God had acted powerfully on their behalf in history; the promised Messiah would restore the former glory by acting powerfully on their behalf once again" (1987: 74).

More strikingly, Paul puts together in 2 Cor. 12:2 and Rom. 15:19, σημεῖον, τέρας and δυνάμις, which are normally used to indicate miracles in the Gospels (McCasland IDB 3: 394 s.v. "miracle"). Furnish takes 2 Cor. 12:12 to mean that Paul's apostolic signs have been exhibited in Corinth by σημεῖοις, τέρασιν and δυνάμεσιν (cf. 1984: 553). This is very like the description of Mk. 16:20. Martin suggests that it is because the Corinthians sought some special signs, or expected proof of miraculous power in Paul, that Paul had to show true signs of his



apostleship (cf. 1986: 435). Paul's σημεῖα, τέρατα and δυνάμεις seem to refer to his "healing miracles" (so, 1986: 437).

Paul maintains that his Gentile mission has been carried out ἐν δυνάμει σημεῖων καὶ τεράτων (Rom. 15:19). Dunn defines δυνάμεις as "divine power" and regards σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα as "the miracles of the Exodus" (1988: 862; cf. Deut. 6:22). Dunn emphasizes that "Paul's thought here is rooted in salvation-history", i.e., the "eschatological exodus" (1988: 863). That is to say, Paul understands σημεῖον not simply as a sign, but as a sign of God's saving power and action as expressed in miracles.

[43]. Here, Paul seems to employ a contemporary tradition which regards circumcision as the badge of Judaism (cf. Barrett 1991: 86). *Jub.* 15:26:

"And anyone who is born whose own flesh is not circumcised on the eighth day is not from the sons of the covenant which the Lord made for Abraham since (he is) from the children of destruction. And there is therefore no *sign* upon him so that he might belong to the Lord because (he is destined) to be destroyed and annihilated from the earth and to be uprooted from the earth because he has broken the covenant of the Lord our God" (my italics).

This idea possibly stems from Gen. 17:11, where circumcision is regarded as σημεῖον διαθήκης. Dunn claims that σημεῖον διαθήκης refers to "the mark which distinguishes those who bear it as members of the covenant" (1988: 209). The emphasis of the P document, however, is more likely to be upon God's saving action and the people's response. The sense of σημεῖον διαθήκης in Gen. 17:11 is both "the visible and ineradicable mark that a man belongs to God's chosen community" (Davidson 1979: 58) and "an act of confession and an appropriation of the divine revealed will" (von Rad 1972: 201).

Paul employs σημεῖον in Rom. 4:11, so he probably has this tradition in mind. It is, therefore, fair to suggest that, by saying σημεῖον περιτομῆς, Paul regards circumcision still to be a valuable sign of God's saving action for Jews, including Christian Jews, and that undertaking circumcision is still the appropriate response of Jews.

[44]. Using a σφραγίς was customary in the ancient world. It served to "identify things with a sign, figure, letter, or words, or a combination of these" (Fitzner *TDNT* 7: 939). The main function of seals was "legal protection and guarantee" (*TDNT* 7: 940). In Judaism, circumcision is regarded as a seal. It serves as a "sign", marks "identity of designation" and denotes "membership". It acts as "a sign of ownership" and conveys "the idea of power and protection" (*TDNT* 7: 947f.). Notable is the prayer pronounced at the circumcising of a child in *Shab.* 137b:

"He who pronounces the blessing [over the cup of wine] says: Blessed be He who hath sanctified the Beloved from the womb and set the statute in his flesh and *sealed* his offspring with the *sign* of the holy covenant" (*cit.* Cranfield 1975: 236, fn. 4, my italics);

and also Targum *Cant.* 3:8:

"The *seal of circumcision* is in your flesh as it was *sealed* in the flesh of Abraham" (*cit.* Sanday and Headlam 1902: 107, my italics).

Paul very likely has this tradition in mind. When he talks about circumcision as a σφραγίς, he recognizes the significance of circumcision for the Jews.

[45]. Käsemann, on the other hand, claims that σφραγίς has the significance of "eschatological orientation" and that "sealing was meant originally for the last judgment, so that the meaning of σφραγίς as a mark of protection and possession was used" (1980: 115). Käsemann's evidence is taken from Rev. 7:3ff. Sweet maintains that the sealing in Rev. 7:3ff. would "bring out for a Christian the permanent meaning of his baptism, which under worldly pressure he might forget" (1979: 149).

A similar statement is found in 2 Cor. 1:22. There, Paul regards the sealing of the Spirit as a "claiming of property as belonging to a rightful owner" and therefore "a pledge of final salvation" (Martin 1986: 28). This statement is very similar to Eph. 1:13; 4:30. Barth defines σφραγίς as "an event that assures men of their forthcoming inheritance and redemption as 'God's own people'" (1974: 135). C.L. Mitton relates σφραγίς to baptism and claims that baptism serves as an "official seal or confirmation to what definitely but less officially had already taken place in conversion" (1973: 171). That is to say, in both Eph. 1:13 and 4:30, "the Spirit is a pledge of the inheritance and hence the seal by which believers are marked and appointed for redemption" (Fitzner TDNT 7: 949).

This "eschatological orientation", however, is probably not what Paul has in mind in Rom. 4:9-12. It is more likely that Paul tries to reply to his opponents by reinterpreting the *historical* Abraham.

[46]. Paul says that the advantage of the Jews is πολὺ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον. But, after πρῶτον μὲν, Paul does not list the precise advantages in the present passage. Black explains that this is because "Paul does not get beyond his first point; his mind is typically diverted by the thought of the 'untrustworthiness' of the Jews" (1989: 53). Dunn, however, maintains that, although πρῶτον is usually used to indicate the first of a series, the failure to complete the sequence is not surprising in Paul (e.g., Rom. 1:8) and that Paul certainly has other advantages in mind (i.e., Rom. 9:4f.; cf. 1988: 130; Cranfield 1975: 178). Barrett explains πολὺ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον and πρῶτον μὲν in the light of Rom. 1 and 2 and claims that the Jews are "first in election, first in judgement, instructed out of the law, judged by means of the law" (1991: 59). He also maintains that the term, λόγια, has already included "all the others that might be listed" (1991: 60).

What is important here, however, is (1) that Paul does recognize that there are advantages for Jews and (2) that he has listed λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ as one of them.

[47]. In the New Testament, λόγιον clearly refers to God's revelation at Sinai in Acts 7:38 (cf. Bruce 1990: 202; Kittel TDNT 4: 138; BAGD: 476 s.v.). In Rom. 3:2, λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ could refer to (1) God's promises to Israel (cf. Kittel TDNT 4: 138; BAGD: 476 s.v. λόγιον), (2) God's revelation in the Old Testament (cf. Käsemann 1980: 78; Murray 1960: 93; Black 1973: 62), (3) "the utterances of God, given through Moses and the prophets and now constituting the holy scriptures" (Dunn 1988: 130f.), (4) "God's promise in the Old Testament" (Best 1967: 34), (5) "the divine saying in the Torah" (Ziesler 1989: 96), (6) Old Testament promises about the coming of Christ (cf. Black 1973: 62; Döve 1953: 122; Hall 1983: 185), (7) the law as the revelation of God's will (cf. Cranfield 1979: 846), (8) Scripture in the Jewish context, not the law or the prophecies only (cf. Barrett 1991: 60).

Putting these interpretations together, λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ in Rom. 3:2 refers to God's revelation in the Old Testament, the Sinai covenant and the law in particular.

[48]. As regards the context of Rom. 9:4, Black claims that in Rom. 9-11 "Paul deals with the problem of Israel's rejection - her own rejection of the Gospel and, in consequence, her rejection by God" (1989: 122). Paul talks about God's unbreakable love in Christ in Rom. 8:38ff. and then turns to his own people to face the fact of their rejection of the Gospel. Paul believes that the Jews are God's chosen people, even when they reject Christ (cf. 1989: 122f.). Dunn also maintains that Paul here is suffering because God's promise to Abraham has not been fulfilled in his fellow Jews (cf. 1988: 518). Therefore in Rom. 9-11 Paul has to answer the question implied by his statement οὐχ οἶον ὅτι ἐκπέπτωκεν ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ (Rom. 9:6a) in Rom. 9-11.

In Rom. 9:4-5, Paul has to answer a question that arose in the course of his arguments in chs. 1-8, i.e., "If entry into the people of God is solely by faith, and for Jews and Gentiles equally, what happens to the special position of Israel in the purposes of God?" (Ziesler 1989: 234). Paul's argument in Rom. 9:4-5 seems to be

different from that in 9:6-23. In vv. 4-5, Paul asserts that God's covenant and promise are given to the historical Israel, while in vv. 6-23 God's covenant and promise are given only to a selected group within Israel. Ziesler rightly solves this problem by suggesting that vv. 4-5 is dealing with the case "in Jewish estimation" and that vv. 6-23 is talking about the case "in the divine estimation" (1989: 237).

[49]. Epp states that αἱ διαθήκαι refers to the old and new covenants (cf. 1986: 83). Roetzel points out that because the plural form διαθήκαι mainly refers to "decrees", "statutes", "ordinances" or "commandments", διαθήκαι in Rom. 9:4 should mean "the ordinances, commandments, or perhaps oaths which Yahweh in his grace gave to Israel" (1970: 390).

Cranfield claims that αἱ διαθήκαι refers to the covenants given to Abraham (Gen. 15:17ff.; 17:1ff.), on Sinai (Ex. 19:5; 24:1ff.), in Moab (Deut. 29:1ff.), on the mountains Ebal and Gerizim (Josh. 8:30ff.) and to David (2 Sam. 23:5; cf. 1979: 462; Black 1989: 125). Dunn, however, maintains that διαθήκαι does not refer to different covenants, but to "the covenant given to Abraham and renewed to Isaac and Jacob" (Lev. 26:42: "then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; I will remember also my covenant with Isaac and also my covenant with Abraham"), i.e., "the covenant(s) with the fathers" (Deut. 4:31: "he will not forget the covenant with your ancestors"; 7:12: "the Lord your God will maintain with you the covenant loyalty that he swore to your ancestors"; 1988: 527).

Paul, however, might not have so many covenants in mind as Cranfield and Black mention above. Rather, although Paul always favours the covenants with the patriarchs (and this is confirmed by the mention of οἱ πατέρες in Rom. 9:5), it is more likely that what Paul precisely has in mind is the covenant of Sinai; Paul is here talking about the advantages of the Jews and the covenant of Sinai is particularly important for them. As a result, Ziesler is perhaps correct to suggest that αἱ διαθήκαι refer to the covenants of both Sinai and Abraham (cf. 1989: 237).

[50]. Φύσις in Gal. 2:15 is defined as a "natural endowment or condition" which is inherited from one's ancestors (BAGD: 869 s.v. 1). Köster disagrees with Bonhöffer's explanation which interprets φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι as "what is native in contrast to what is learned later" and claims that φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι means "being a Jew in essence" by fulfilment of the law (cf. Köster TDNT 9: 272 and fn. 206). The "we" in Gal. 2:15, however, refers to Paul, Peter and other Christian Jews who are Jews certainly by "what is native", namely, by birth, rather than by "what is learned later", namely, fulfilment of the law. It is, therefore, fair to conclude that φύσις in Gal. 2:15 means "by birth" (cf. Betz 1979: 115; Longenecker 1990: 83).

[51]. Basically "sin" meant "not hitting" or "missing". It was used of both the intellectually and the morally inferior. In late Judaism, the rabbis regarded the law as God's revelation. Therefore those who had the law and kept it were holy and those who did not have the law, or did not keep it were "sinners" (cf. Rengstorff TDNT 1: 317-335). These "sinners" included Jews who abandoned the law, or did not observe the law properly. Tax collectors were regarded as "sinners", because of political reasons (cf. Guelich 1989: 101). Gentiles were also considered as "sinners", for, by definition, they were outside the covenant and therefore outside the law (cf. Fitzmyer 1981: 591). Therefore, the term, "sinners", in many documents was used more or less as a synonym for Gentiles (cf. Dunn 1990c: 73f.; Lührmann 1989: 86). For example, Jub. 23:23f.: "And he [sc. Lord] will rouse up against them the sinners of the nations ... they will cry out and call and pray to be saved from the hand of the sinners, the gentiles ..." Cf. [4.1.1] on Gal. 2:11-14).

[52]. Sanders repeatedly emphasizes that "to be righteoused" in Paul is a "transfer term" (cf. 1977: 544, 470ff., 501, 518, fn. 5; 1983: 5-10, 45; 1991: 48). He says:

"to be righteous in Jewish literature means to obey the Torah and to repent of transgression, but in Paul it means to be saved by Christ. Most succinctly, righteousness in Judaism is a term which implies the *maintenance of status* among the group of the elect; in Paul it is a *transfer term*. In Judaism, that is, commitment to the covenant puts one 'in', while obedience (righteousness) subsequently keeps one in. In Paul's usage, 'be made righteous' ('be justified') is a term indicating getting in, not staying in the body of the saved. Thus when Paul says that one cannot be made righteous by works of law, he means that one cannot, by works of law, 'transfer to the body of the saved'" (1977: 544, his italics).

Dunn, however, interprets "being justified" in Gal. 2:16 as "God's righteousness" and claims that:

"'being justified' is ... something Jewish, something which belongs to Jews 'by nature,' something which distinguishes them from 'Gentile sinners' ... this is covenant language ... they have been chosen as a people by God, and separated from the surrounding nations ... God's righteousness is precisely God's covenant faithfulness, his saving power and love for his people Israel ... God's justification is rather God's acknowledgement that someone is in the covenant - whether that is an *initial* acknowledgement, or a *repeated* action of God (God's saving acts), or his *final* vindication of his people" (1990f: 190, his italics).

Räsänen disagrees with Dunn's argument and claims that δικαιούσθαι belongs to transfer terminology. He maintains:

"It is not correct methodology ... to support the 'covenantal' understanding of the verb δικαιούσθαι with the usage of the *noun* combination δικαιούσθαι θεοῦ in the OT. Furthermore, it is hardly possible to take δικαιούσθαι as a reference to 'day-to-day conduct' ... The verse [sc. Gal. 2:16] envisages the entry into the Christian community. The aorist ἐπιστεύσαμεν must refer to a once-and-for all step: 'also we have *come* to believe in Christ Jesus'" (1985: 545, his italics).

And then, Räsänen interprets Gal. 2:16 as follows:

"Quite possibly Paul refers in v. 16b to the decisive new step of *baptism* ... ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν in v. 16c then refers to the result of the faith decision ... which is the gaining of a *new* relationship with God. Verse 16a refers to the same thing in the form of a general rule, whence the 'timeless' present form. V.16d repeats the rule partly in the wording of Ps 142.2 LXX ... δικαιούσθαι is ... in Gal 2.16a,c,d a striking example of the use of the δικ- root as transfer terminology" (1985: 545, his italics).

In response to Räsänen's criticism, Dunn still maintains:

"The verb (sc. δικαιούσθαι) certainly does denote 'transfer' on several occasions; nearly half the relevant Pauline uses are aorist and perfect tenses. But more than half are present and future tenses. To be sure, the present tenses could be taken as 'timeless' presents, but most of the future tenses are best taken as referring to future (= final) justification (on the day of judgement) (Rom. 2.1; 3.20; Gal. 2.16; 5.4). Moreover, the aorists in Romans 8.30 appear to cover (in retrospect) the whole salvation process that lies between 'being called' and 'being glorified'; that is to say, they probably embrace the whole process from initial acceptance by God ('transfer') to the final vindication at the seat of judgement. So too in Galatians 2.17 the aorist includes the seeking of justification as an ongoing goal ... it becomes clearer that by 'the righteousness of God' Paul means the power of divine grace which is effective 'for salvation' (Rom. 1.16-17), from first to last" (1990a: 207f.).



Ziesler, on the other hand, explains that the verb δικαιώω in Paul is used forensically and relationally and that the noun δικαιοσύνη and adjective δίκαιος also have behavioural nuances (cf. 1972: 212). Longenecker seems to follow this line and maintains that the "δικαι- cluster of words" in Paul's letters has "both forensic and ethical significance" (1990: 85). Similarly, Bruce states that the words in the δικαι- group may have either a "relational" or a "behavioural" sense (1982: 138).

All these interpretations can be classified in terms of Sanders' view of "getting in" and "staying in". "Transfer term", "forensic", "relational" and Dunn's view of "initial acknowledgement" can be connected with "getting in". "Ethical", "behavioural" and Dunn's view of "repeated action" and "final vindication" are equivalent to "staying in". Therefore, what these scholars are arguing about is whether the words in the δικαι- group are used only of entrance into God's people, or whether they are also suitable to be applied to the state and lifestyle after entrance.

It is very likely that δικαιοῦται in the Pauline epistles has various meanings. It all depends on the context. Ziesler rightly indicates:

"For Paul, the verb (sc. δικαιώω) may mean 'acquit' in the divine court, but it is often used where the forensic note is at best muffled and where the main thing is restoration to relationship with God. The simple verb 'accept' is frequently an adequate translation. Paul does not always use 'justify' in the same tense: as *past* it can be transfer terminology, i.e. it denotes the move from unacceptability into acceptance with God, or from being outside his people, into it ... as *future* it can refer to the Last Judgment and the verdict of God ... as *present* it is often taken to denote the continuing acceptance by God of those who have entered his people" (1989: 86, my italics).

In the light of this understanding, Sanders is wrong because he confines "to be righteous" to *only* a transfer term. Transferring to the community of God's people, however, is only one of the meanings of "to be justified".

In the context of Gal. 2:16, δικαιοῦται is very likely a transfer term which is used of entrance into the community of God's people. In this clause, δικαιοῦται is used with ἄνθρωπος which is used in "its wholly indefinite sense", as equivalent to τις (Burton 1921: 120). Therefore ἄνθρωπος should include both Jew and Gentile (cf. Bruce 1982: 138). Because Paul does not prohibit the Jews from observing the law after they have entered the community of God's people by faith in Christ, the only case in which Paul rejects the law for both Jews and Gentiles is the occasion of entrance into the Christian community. As a result, δικαιοῦται in Gal. 2:16a should be treated as a transfer term.

This interpretation is confirmed by the broader context. The main issue of the Antioch episode is circumcision (see [4.1.1] on Gal. 2:11-14) which must be treated as a once-and-for all act. It is, therefore, possible for Paul to claim that everyone, including the circumcised Jew and the uncircumcised Gentile, is able to enter into the community of God's people by faith in Christ, neither by works of the law, nor by circumcision in particular.

Dunn is, therefore, wrong when he claims that "being justified" in Gal. 2:16 is an initial acknowledgement, a repeated action of God, or the final vindication. In Paul in general, "being justified" may have all three of these meanings. In Gal. 2:16, however, "being justified" means only an initial acknowledgement. Consequently, Räisänen's argument and his criticism of Dunn is correct. In Gal. 2:16, δικ- root is a transfer terminology.

In short, "being justified" in Paul in general may have many meanings. It can be a transfer term which indicates the act of entrance into the Christian community in the past, it can refer to the Last Judgment and the verdict of God in the future and it can denote the continuing acceptance of God in the present. In Gal. 2:16, however, δικαιοῦται is a transfer term.

[53]. Most commentators connect ἔργων νόμου in Gal. 2:16 with "legalism". Betz understands ἔργων νόμου as "meritorious works of the Torah which 'earn' eschatological justification" (1979: 117). Bruce defines this phrase as "the actions prescribed by the law" and then claims that what is deprecated is not the law itself, but the performing of it in a spirit of legalism, or the idea that the observance of it will win acceptance before God (cf. 1982: 137). Longenecker maintains that ἔργων νόμου indicates the whole legalistic complex of performances which are practised in order to win God's favour (cf. 1990: 86).

Ἔργα νόμου in Paul has been interpreted as (1) the law (cf. Ziesler 1989: 105f.), (2) works-righteousness, or legalism (cf. Cranfield 1975: 197f.; *idem* 1991: 100; Snodgrass 1986: 84; Schreiner 1991: 244), (3) "works done in obedience to the law" (Barrett 1991: 67; cf. Moo 1991: 210), (4) "deeds demanded by the Sinaitic law code, a 'law' which 'rests' on 'works'" (Westerholm 1988: 121), (5) a normal subjective genitive: works which the law does (cf. Gaston 1987c: 100-106).

Tyson, however, claims that it is not proper to confuse "works of the law" with human deeds of meritorious quality (cf. 1973: 431). He, then, suggests that "works of the law" refers specifically to a life which is associated with circumcision and food laws (cf. *ibid.*). Similarly, Dunn maintains that "works of the law" refers particularly to circumcision, food laws and the sabbath, which function as the marks of Jewish self-identity (see [1.4] on "Dunn's position").

Both Tyson and Dunn are likely right. "Works of the law" do not refer to "legalism", but to circumcision and food laws in particular. In the context of Gal. 2:16, the primary focus of ἔργων νόμου is best understood as circumcision, which is the main issue of the Antioch episode.

[54]. There is much discussion on the issue of whether Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ is an "objective genitive" or a "subjective genitive". If "subjective genitive" is taken, πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ means the "faith or faithfulness of Jesus Christ" which refers to "what Christ has done" (Hooker 1989: 340; cf. Longenecker 1990: 87; Torrance 1957: 111-114; Gaston 1987b: 117; *idem* 1987d: 58; *idem* 1987e: 70; Howard 1967: 459-465; *idem* 1974: 212-215; *idem* 1991: 58f., 95, fn. 191).

According to the context of Gal. 2:16, however, the meaning of πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ should be determined by ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν in v. 16b. Here, Christ is clearly the object of the faith (cf. Betz 1979: 117f; Bruce 1982: 139; Fung 1988: 115). Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in Gal. 2:16 is, therefore, best understood as an "objective genitive". Accordingly, "faith in Jesus Christ" is the best interpretation for πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (cf. Burton 1921: 121; Betz 1979: 118; Bruce 1982: 136; Dunn 1990f: 195; Räisänen 1985: 546).

Betz defines πίστις Χριστοῦ in Paul as "faith in the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ", i.e., "being in Christ" (1979: 117; cf. Bultmann *TDNT* 6: 203). Bruce explains this phrase as "the personal faith that unites one to Christ along with all fellow-members of the new covenant community - all those who, in Paul's idiom, are 'in Christ'" (1982: 139). Burton interprets it as "the committal of one's self to Christ on the basis of the acceptance of the message concerning him" (1921: 123).

Sanders and Bornkamm, however, claim that Paul seems not to provide a precise definition of πίστις or πίστις Χριστοῦ (cf. Sanders 1977: 493; Bornkamm 1971: 141). Paul's definition of faith is really not very clear. Paul's audience perhaps has already shared the understanding of "faith" and of "faith in Christ" with Paul. Consequently, Paul in his epistles takes this understanding for granted. He needs not explain it.

Nevertheless, what is important when Paul is talking about πίστις Χριστοῦ is the fact that all the passages (Gal. 2:16; 3:22; Rom. 3:22, 26; Phil. 3:9) are connected with righteousness and that in each of them πίστις Χριστοῦ is contrasted with the righteousness which is based on the law (cf. Hooker 1989: 336).

This suggests that Paul wants to draw a sharp distinction between the righteousness which is based on faith in Christ and that which is based on the law, in order to emphasize that it is faith in Christ, not the law, which leads one into the community of God's people.

[55]. Burton points out that ἐὼν μὴ is "exceptive", not "adversative". He furthermore argues that it introduces an exception to οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος alone, because if ἐὼν μὴ introduces exception into the whole sentence, οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, then v. 16a would mean that "a man can be justified by works of law if this be accompanied by faith" which is never expressed by Paul (1921: 121). Burton, however, still translates ἐὼν μὴ by "but only", because "the word 'except' in English is always understood to introduce an exception to the whole of what precedes" (1921: 121).

Dunn renders ἐὼν μὴ by "except" and explains that:

"in this clause (sc. Gal. 2:16) faith in Jesus is described as a *qualification* to justification by works of law, not (yet) as an antithetical alternative. Seen from the perspective of Jewish Christianity at that time, the most obvious meaning is that *the only restriction on justification by works of law is faith in Jesus as Messiah*" (1990f: 195, his italics).

The reason is:

"so far as the Jewish Christian was concerned, belief in Jesus as Messiah did not require him to abandon his Jewishness, to give up the badges of his national religion, to call in question works of the law as the still necessary response of the Jew to God's covenant grace" (1990f: 196).

Longenecker, however, criticises Dunn's interpretation as "totally contrary to what Paul says elsewhere about the relation of faith and the law - even contrary to what he says in the latter half of this same verse" (1990: 85). Longenecker regards ἐὼν μὴ as "adversative" and translates it as "but only" (*ibid.*; cf. Räisänen 1985: 547). Bruce claims that Dunn's translation ἐὼν μὴ as "except" is "to run counter to Greek idiom" (1988: 125). Bruce explains ἐὼν μὴ as "to exclude the previous option, 'by works of law', and to replace it by the principle of 'faith in Jesus Christ'" (1988: 124f.).

All the suggestions above fail to see the force of ἄνθρωπος in 2:16a. Ἄνθρωπος should include Jew and Gentile (cf. Bruce 1982: 138). Even Dunn himself translates ἄνθρωπος as "a man" (1990f: 195). For the Jews, Paul could say that "one is not justified by works of the law *except* through faith in Jesus Christ" as Dunn reads it. For Gentiles, however, Paul can only say that "one is not justified by works of the law, *but* only through faith in Jesus Christ". It is, therefore, fair to conclude that ἐὼν μὴ in Gal. 2:16 means "but".

[56]. Räisänen claims that the aorist ἐπιστεύσαμεν must refer to an "once-and-for-all step" and that ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν refers to "the result of the faith decision" (1985: 545; cf. Betz 1979: 117f.; Longenecker 1990: 88; Dunn 1990a: 208).

[57]. In the ancient world, "dogs" were mainly known as "wild creatures which roamed the streets in packs scavenging for refuse on which to feed, 'dog' became a word of reproach" (Davies and Allison 1988: 675, on Mt. 7:6). For the Jews, "dog" was a stock term for the ignorant (*die Unwissenden*), the godless (*die Gottlosen*) and therefore the heathen (*die Nichtisraeliten*) (cf. Str-B 3: 621; Hawthorne 1983: xlv). The term was often used in Judaism of Gentile unbelievers (cf. Hill 1972: 254; H. Anderson 1976: 190; Byrne 1990: 796; Caird 1976: 133), who did not adhere to the law of Moses and therefore were unclean (cf. Collange 1979: 124).

Gentiles are compared with dogs, unworthy to be taught the Torah. For example, b. *Hagigah* 13a:



"As the sacred food was intended for men, but not for the *dogs*, the Torah was intended to be given to the Chosen People, but not to the *Gentiles*" (*cit.* Lane 1974: 262, fn. 63, my italics).

"Dogs" in Phil. 3:2, however, refer to Jewish missionaries. The reason is not simply that they "prowl around the Christian congregations, seeking to win Gentile converts over to Judaism", so that Paul compared them to "scavenger dogs" (Beare 1973: 103), but rather that these Jewish missionaries had insulted the Gentiles as "dogs". Paul, therefore, uses "dogs", a term originally used by Jews to insult Gentiles, to insult Jews in return. For Paul, "the Jews were the real pariahs that defile the holy community, the Christian church, with their erroneous teaching" (Hawthorne 1983: 125; *cf.* Jewett 1970: 386).

[58]. Beare translates ἐργάτας as "labourers" and takes the term to refer to "Christian missionaries, whom God sends forth into his harvest (Matt. ix. 38)" (1973: 104). Schweizer, on the other hand, claims that ἐργάτας in Mt. 9:38 refers to the angels (*cf.* 1975: 234). The main theme of Mt. 9:38 is that "when men reach the limit of their abilities, God will intervene and perform his great deeds" (*ibid.*). It is, therefore, better to understand ἐργάτας as "observers of the Law" (Hawthorne 1983: 125).

Observance of the law was always a great source of pride for the Jews: "They thus viewed themselves as good workers (καλοὶ ἐργάται), noble observers of the Law" (Hawthorne 1983: 125). Paul, however, plays on words here and describes them as κακοὶ ἐργάται, or malicious workers, those "bent on doing evil to others" (Beare 1973: 104). Most commentators argue that Paul calls his opponents κακοὶ ἐργάται because of their reliance on observing the law. Paul, however, is objecting not so much to their legalism in observing the law, but rather to their "membership legalism" by means of which they seek to impose on the Gentiles, observance of the law, circumcision in particular.

[59]. Paul insults his opponents by suggesting that their circumcision is simply a mutilation. As such, it is closer to the practices of the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:28), than to Jewish religion. Indeed, according to Levitical law, a mutilated man was excluded from the priesthood and from making sacrifices (*cf.* Caird 1976: 134; Lev. 21:16-23). Paul makes his point by means of a deliberate choice of words. He does not choose περιτομή, which can be used positively to refer to circumcision, but rather κατατομή, which means "incision" and which is normally confined to the scientific sphere (*cf.* Köster TDNT 8: 109). In his eyes, therefore, their physical circumcision is "nothing but a cutting" (Collange 1979: 124), nothing but "dissection" (Köster TDNT 8:110f.).

[60]. In Phil. 3:3, σάρξ does not refer to "human privilege and achievement" (Beare 1973: 106), nor to "human nature without the divine Spirit" (Vincent 1897: 94), nor to "human nature as unredeemed and unresponsive to God's eschatological grace" (Byrne 1990: 796), but rather to the rite of circumcision, "an operation performed on the body - in the flesh" (Hawthorne 1983: 127; *cf.* Caird 1976: 134; Collange 1979: 125).

[61]. The main purpose of the statements in Jeremiah is probably that physical circumcision cannot protect the chosen people automatically and that a false confidence in physical circumcision in fact leads to disaster such as that of the exile. As a result, circumcision must be spiritualized. This circumcision of the heart is equivalent to obedience to the law (*cf.* Carroll 1986: 158f., 250-252).

[62]. Of these seven advantages, the first four are inherited privileges. They are governed by the preposition, ἐκ. The last three are personal achievements regarding the law. They are governed by κατά (*cf.* O'Brien 1991: 368; Silva 1988: 174). In both groups, there is a logical progression moving towards a climax. In

the first group, circumcision comes first, followed by reference to his birth and upbringing. This is surely because circumcision is the main point of disagreement between Paul and his opponents (vv. 2-3). The second group also moves toward a climax. It begins with Paul's being a Pharisee in relation to the law, continues with his zeal in persecuting the church and ends with his confession that he is blameless according to the requirements of the law (cf. O'Brien 1991: 368f.; Silva 1988: 174).

[63]. Circumcision is the sign of belonging to the covenant (Gen. 17:11). Moreover, to be circumcised on the eighth day is in accordance with the strictest tradition (Lev. 12:3). The P document traces this tradition back to the time when God first gave the command to circumcise (Gen. 17:12). This tradition was confirmed immediately after Isaac's birth (Gen. 21:4). Being circumcised on the eighth day also distinguishes Paul from two groups of people, the proselytes, who were circumcised when they converted and the Arabians, who were circumcised when they were thirteen years old (Jos. *Ant.* 1:214). By saying περιτομή ὀκταήμερος, Paul emphasizes that not only is he a genuine Israelite, but that he comes from "a family meticulous in its fulfilment of the prescribed duties" (Beare 1973: 106).

[64]. In Rom. 9:4-5, Paul connects "Israel" with both ἡ δόξα καὶ αἱ διαθήκαι καὶ ἡ νομοθεσία καὶ ἡ λατρεία καὶ αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι and οἱ πατέρες καὶ ... ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα. Therefore, "Israel" is "the sacred name for the Jews, as a nation of the theocracy, the people in covenant relation with God" (Hawthorne 1983: 132; cf. Collange 1979: 126). By emphasizing his birth into the chosen race and his subsequent circumcision according to the strictest rule, Paul claims that he has inherited "all the privileges of the covenant community, privileges he enumerates in relation to Israel" (O'Brien 1991: 370). This descent was very important to the Israelites. If a girl wanted to marry a priest, her father was required to prove Israelite descent for three generations (cf. Caird 1976: 135; O'Brien 1991: 371, fn. 30). In 2 Cor. Paul meets a challenge about descent from his opponents. He answers this challenge by saying Ἰσραηλιταὶ εἰσιν; καὶ γὰρ (11:22).

[65]. In order to prove his Jewishness, Paul traces his descent from a nation to a particular tribe, Βενιαμίν. The reason Paul mentions Benjamin is probably that the tribe of Benjamin was Paul's tribe: "Paul is reciting his titles of honour, as he regarded them before he became a Christian, and a man of Benjamin would naturally take pride in his own tribe" (Beare 1973: 106f.; cf. Collange 1979: 126). That is to say, it is not necessary to suppose that the tribe of Benjamin was specially important.

[66]. In the Old Testament, "Hebrew" is a legal term rather than an ethnic term (Ex. 21:2), a term used by foreigners to denote Israel (Gen. 39:14), or used by Israelites to distinguish their own people from foreigners (Ex. 1:19; cf. von Rad *TDNT* 3: 358f.; Vincent 1897: 96). Therefore, οἱ Ἑβραῖοι in Phil. 3:5 could be "a national name for Jews in contrast to Gentiles" (BAGD: 213 s.v. Ἑβραῖος 1; cf. Lüdemann 1989: 78). In the New Testament, Ἑβραῖος normally denotes the language (Gutbrod *TDNT* 3: 388). In Acts 21:40 and 22:2, Paul spoke to the crowd in τῇ Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ. Most scholars claim that this Ἑβραῖος refers to Aramaic (cf. Vincent 1897: 97; Conzelmann 1987: 184; Neil 1973: 222; Bruce 1990: 453; Haenchen 1971: 620; Beare 1973: 107).

In Acts 6:1, οἱ Ἑβραῖοι are distinguished from οἱ Ἑλληνισταί. This distinction denotes "a cultural difference expressed in the use of language" (Martin 1976: 128). In this contrast, οἱ Ἑλληνισταί refers to those Jews who speak only Greek, who are normally resident outside Palestine and only temporarily living in Jerusalem, or who, having been brought up overseas, are now permanently settled in Jerusalem and therefore perhaps have been affected by Gentile customs, culture and even faith. Οἱ Ἑβραῖοι refers to those Jews who speak Aramaic as their mother

tongue, although they probably know Greek as well, Jews whose geographical origins are in Palestine, or those Diaspora Jews who have special connections with Palestine in terms of language, life-style and faith and are therefore not influenced by Hellenism (cf. Hengel 1983a: 9f.; O'Brien 1991: 371; Gutbrod *TDNT* 3: 388-391; BAGD: 213 s.v. Ἑβραῖος 2; Martin 1976: 128; *idem* 1986: 374; Hawthorne 1983: 133; Collange 1979: 127; Vincent 1897: 97; Conzelmann 1987: 45; Neil 1973: 102; Bruce 1990: 181; Haenchen 1971: 260f., 267; Furnish 1984: 514; Dunn 1990a: 268f.; Lüdemann 1989: 78).

Paul was born in Tarsus (Acts 22:3), a flourishing Hellenistic city and the centre of Greek culture because of its favorable situation for trade and commerce (cf. Bornkamm 1971: 3; Kim 1981: 32). As a result, Paul might have been labelled as a Hellenist by his opponents (cf. O'Brien 1991: 372; Hawthorne 1983: 133). By claiming to be a Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων (Phil. 3:5), Paul wants to emphasize that he is a man "belonging to the elite of his race, tracing his ancestry beyond Tarsus to Palestine, a person safeguarded against the influences of Hellenization by the protective walls of Jewish tradition" (Hawthorne 1983: 133; cf. Vincent 1897: 97).

Paul's education has attracted many scholars' attention. The question, at what age Paul moved to Jerusalem, is the key point in deciding how much knowledge Paul has about Judaism and Hellenism. In Acts 22:3, Luke says that Paul is an ἄνθρωπος Ἰουδαῖος, γεγεννημένος ἐν Ταρσῷ τῆς Κιλικίας, ἀνατεθραμμένος δὲ ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ, παρὰ τοὺς πόδας Γαμαλιήλ πεπαιδευμένος κατὰ ἀκρίβειαν τοῦ πατρῷου νόμου. The key word in this statement is the verb ἀνατρέφω. Van Unnik suggests that the ἀνατρέφειν includes two stages and that both take place in the parental home. The first stage is "to feed" in terms both of receiving food and of initial mental education. This education is undertaken by the mother (cf. 1962: 33). The second is further teaching about "the tongue, the customs, the formation of character, and the elementary duties towards elders, the gods, and the State" (1962: 34). It is undertaken by the father, until the child goes to school. There teachers are responsible for τὸ παιδεύειν (cf. *ibid.*).

[67]. The statement, κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος, means that "the particular approach he chose for his interpretation of the law was that of the Pharisees" (Silva 1988: 174). As far as adherence to the law is concerned, the Pharisees were the strictest of the Jewish sects (Acts 26:5; Jos. *Wars* 2:162; cf. Hawthorne 1983: 133; Schürer 1979: 388), for the Pharisees were those "who sought earnestly and consistently to put into practice the ideal propounded by the Torah scholars of a life lived in conformity with the Torah" (Schürer 1979: 389).

The meaning of Φαρισαῖοι is "the separated ones" (Lohse 1976: 77; Jeremias 1969: 246; Schürer 1979: 396). This refers to a separation from uncleanness which includes separation from unclean persons (Schürer 1979: 396). The idea of separation can be traced back as far as the restoration from the exile (cf. Schürer 1979: 396; Ezra 6:21). The Pharisaic idea of separation began among the Hasideans of Maccabean times, when it was necessary "to defend the Jewish faith against the infiltration of Hellenistic influence" (Lohse 1976: 77). Then, when proper worship of the Temple was restored, the Pharisees separated themselves from the Hasmoneans, because they were not interested in political power (cf. *ibid.*). From this time onward, the Pharisees gave up their efforts to change political circumstances by violence and separated themselves to wait for renewal by God by means of "pious living, prayer, and fasting" (Lohse 1976: 77f.). Therefore, the distinctive characteristics of the Pharisees were that they had the highest degree of faithfulness and sincerity in the fulfilment of "the religious precepts laid down by Pharisaic scribes, especially the precepts on tithes and purity" (Jeremias 1969: 247; cf. Lohse 1976: 78; Hill 1972: 312f. on Mt. 23:23; Fitzmyer 1985: 948 on Lk. 11:42).

Perhaps Paul's opponents had been attacking him about his law-free Gentile mission. In response, Paul mentions his former attachment to the Pharisees and



claims that, as to the observance of the law, he had once belonged to the strictly orthodox school of interpreting and practising the law.

[68]. The second statement of Paul's personal achievement is his description of himself as κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. The original meaning of ζῆλος is "the capacity or state of passionate commitment to a person" (Stumpff *TDNT* 2: 877). In the LXX and rabbinic literature, this term denotes "a specific intensity in the divine action", i.e., God's zeal turns against the apostasy of Israel, because he is holy (cf. *TDNT* 2: 879). Therefore, in 2 Cor. 11:2, Paul claims that he jealously guards the church from falling into error. This is also possibly the reason he persecutes the church before becoming a Christian.

Zeal is one of the well-known characteristics of the Pharisees. It is classically encountered in the Maccabean period. Phinehas is normally regarded as the prototype of this godly zeal (cf. Martin 1976: 128; O'Brien 1991: 375; 1 Macc. 2:23-26). He attempts to put an end, even by violence, to the apostasy which has damaged the purity of the covenant community. Paul's zeal in persecuting the church, therefore, probably stems from the belief that the proclamation of the church is apostasy and harmful to the community. Paul is, therefore, zealous in his attack on the church, in order to keep the community pure.

The noun ἐκκλησία derives from the verb, ἐκ-καλέω, which is used for "the summons to the army to assemble" (O'Brien 1982: 57). The noun itself refers to an assembly of the citizens of the Greek city, or city-state, in order to take political and judicial decisions (cf. O'Brien 1991: 57). In the LXX, ἐκκλησία is always used to render the Hebrew *qāhāl* which means "the congregation of Israel ... assembled to hear the word of God" (O'Brien 1991: 377, fn. 61; cf. *idem* 1982: 58; Hawthorne 1983: 134; Schmidt *TDNT* 3: 502-504; Deut. 4:10).

In the New Testament, including Paul, what is important for ἐκκλησία is not assembling *as such*, but that it is God who assembles his people. Consequently, the ἐκκλησία is the church of God which consists of all the people who belong to him (cf. Schmidt *TDNT* 3: 504f.). When Paul mentions ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ, what he particularly has in mind is that God has sent Christ and has commissioned Paul to assemble a people in Christ's name. Therefore, ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ means the assembly of God in Christ (cf. *TDNT* 3: 506-509).

In the light of these understandings, the meaning of ἐκκλησία in Phil. 3:6 is probably twofold. It could refer to the assembly of Israel in the Old Testament. This is perhaps the common thought of Jews, including the pre-Christian Paul. But what Paul persecutes is obviously the Christian church. So Paul may be employing ἐκκλησία here to emphasize that now it is the Christian community that is the real ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ (cf. Burton 1921: 45). Hawthorne seems to be right when he points out that Paul "seemed to be saying that while he, an ardent young Pharisee, a new Phinehas ... attempted to preserve the purity of the church (i.e. the ancient Israel of God, the holy community), he ended up persecuting the church (i.e. the New Israel, the true heir and successor of God's chosen people)" (1983: 134).

The verb διώκω is frequently connected with the "idea of hostile purpose" (Burton 1921: 45). Its basic meaning is "to cause something to run", "to pursue", "to chase". The full meaning is equivalent to "an army pursuing its enemy and setting it to flight, or a hunter tracking down his quarry and putting it on the run" (Hawthorn 1983: 134; cf. O'Brien 1991: 376).

Paul does not explain the nature of his persecution of the Christian church in Phil 3:6, but in Gal 1:13 and 2 Cor. 11:24, he gives us some clues. Hultgren takes the description of thirty-nine lashes in 2 Cor. 11:24 and claims that the nature of the persecution was not execution, but only disciplinary flogging (cf. 1976: 101) imposed on a sub-group within the synagogue (cf. *ibid.*; Fredriksen 1991: 549f.). He renders καθ' ὑπερβολήν by "to the utmost" and suggests that Paul was an officer of the Jewish court who was responsible for seeing that the punishment was carried out καθ' ὑπερβολήν, to the maximum thirty-nine lashes (cf. Hultgren 1976: 109; Fredriksen 1991: 549, 556).

[69]. The phrase, δικαιοσύνη ἐν νόμῳ, may be understood as "the righteousness which is in the law" (Silva 1988: 176; cf. O'Brien 1991: 378; Vincent 1897: 98). It refers to "an observable standard of conduct, that is, the righteous way of life prescribed by the OT" (Silva 1988: 176; cf. O'Brien 1991: 379). This idea is equivalent to the fulfilment of the law by a certain kind of behaviour (cf. Ziesler 1972: 148). Certainly, Paul is talking about his past and therefore is speaking in terms of the Jewish understanding of "righteousness", that is, obedience to the law. Δικαιοσύνη ἐν νόμῳ is best understood in the light of κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος. In this context, δικαιοσύνη ἐν νόμῳ refers to the fulfilment of the requirement of the law as interpreted by the Pharisees for whom circumcision was probably the most important element.

The difference between the present passage and Rom. 7 is remarkable. E.W. Mitton is right to distinguish standing before men from standing before God; he points out that in Rom. 7 "Paul speaks as at the judgment seat of *God*, who reads the motive and the hidden thought", but that in Phil. 3:6 "he is defending himself, his apostleship, and his interpretation of the gospel, against *men* who claim that their Jewish status and their strict Pharisaic obedience to the Law give them the right to pass judgment on him" (1954: 100, my italics; cf. Espy 1985: 177f., fn. 6; O'Brien 1991: 380).

Why Paul says that he is ἄμειπτος as to δικαιοσύνην ἐν νόμῳ has attracted a lot of discussion. Stendahl claims that when Paul regarded himself as blameless as to the righteousness required by the law, he was talking about his subjective conscience (cf. 1976: 81). Silva disagrees with this interpretation and maintains that Paul was "countering the Judaizer's claims by showing his *credentials*; all of the items listed are accessible, objectively verifiable claims ... anyone interested could have 'checked the record'" (1988: 175, his italics; cf. O'Brien 1991: 380; Espy 1985: 162, 177). Paul regarded his blamelessness as an "objective fact", equivalent to his circumcision, his membership of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin and his being a Pharisee (cf. O'Brien 1991: 380). The adjective ἄμειπτος does not, therefore, simply mean "without sin", or "without transgression" (Espy 1985: 165) in general, but rather more precisely refers to "an exemplary way of life that is in conformity with the OT as interpreted along Pharisaic lines" (O'Brien 1991: 380; cf. Silva 1988: 175).

In short, when Paul says that κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμειπτος, he is summing up the main points of vv. 4-6 and maintaining that he has more advantages by birth and has been more observant of the law than his opponents (v. 4: ἐγὼ μᾶλλον). As a result, he is blameless before men, particularly before his opponents. In vv. 7-11 he emphasizes that even though he is such a model Jew, he still regards all he has as loss, because of Christ.

[70]. A similar contrast is found in Mk. 8:36. Lane claims that this passage indicates that "a comparison of values is the proper setting for a consideration of profit and loss. Corresponding to the advantage gained - the whole world - is the payment which must be forfeited - authentic life" (1974: 309; cf. Mt. 16:26).

Paul also uses contrast in 2 Cor. 3:7-11. There is a sharp contrast between the two ministries. The one is the ministry of death (2 Cor. 3:7) and condemnation (3:9). The other one is the ministry of the Spirit (3:8) and righteousness (3:9). Such a sharp contrast is probably rhetorical, because Paul also on one occasion maintains that ὁ μὲν νόμος ἅγιος καὶ ἡ ἐντολὴ ἀγία καὶ δικαία καὶ ἀγαθή (Rom. 7:12). Even in 2 Cor. 3, Paul says, τῇ διακονίᾳ τῆς κατακρίσεως δόξα (v. 9), though immediately after this he says: καὶ γὰρ οὐ δεδόξασται τὸ δεδοξαμένον ἐν τούτῳ τῷ μέρει εἵνεκεν τῆς ὑπερβαλλούσης δόξης" (v. 10) which means that the splendor of the old has been replaced entirely (cf. Furnish 1984: 203, 229; Renwick 1991: 53; Sanders 1983: 141).

Sanders tries to solve this problem by suggesting that it is because of Paul's "black-and-white thinking" that the original "less glorious" and "more glorious" contrast becomes a death-life contrast (cf. 1983: 138). Sanders also suggests why Paul thinks in this way: "Paul had been struggling to hold together his native conviction that the law was given by God and is good with his new conviction that life comes only through Christ and that therefore the law cannot save" (1983: 138).

Here Paul's argument follows a well-established rabbinic exegetical style, "the light and the heavy" (*qal wāhōmer*), which means "if then ... how much more" (Martin 1986: 59). He argues "from the lesser to the greater" (Furnish 1984: 203). Paul's main thesis here is, therefore, that if the ministry of Moses, the whole system of the Jewish law, was accompanied by splendor, then surely the ministry of the Spirit, the Christian ministry of preaching Jesus as the Messiah, is accompanied by a much greater splendor (cf. Furnish 1984: 225, 227; Martin 1986: 73; Wright 1991: 177; Bruce 1971: 191; Renwick 1991: 53).

[71]. Κέρδος means "gain", "advantage", or "profit" (Schlier TDNT 3: 672). Ζημία has three meanings: (1) In commercial life, ζημία broadly means "loss" or "damage" in money or material goods (Acts 27:10). (2) It may also denote moral or spiritual "disadvantage". (3) Ζημία may mean "penalty" or "punishment", when it describes a situation in which "the one who has the advantage is forced to suffer loss (ζημία) to the extent of his advantage" (Stumpff TDNT 2: 889).

[72]. O'Brien claims that πάντα possibly refers to something more than what Paul lists in 3:5-6 and very likely includes Paul's former leadership among the Zealots in the Jewish community before he became a Christian (cf. 1991: 389f.).

[73]. Lang claims that in the radical dualism of later Gnosticism, σκύβαλον refers to the "human body" which is normally regarded as the "material and ungodly garment of the soul" (TDNT 7: 445f.). If Lang is right and if Paul has this idea in mind, then what Paul means by saying that he regards everything as σκύβαλα is that all these Jewish privileges and particularly circumcision are simply material and have nothing to do with what is godly, or righteous.

[74]. O'Brien suggests:

"The perfect tense ἤγημαι ... brings out the present significance of Paul's past change of attitude. Although not explicitly mentioned, his *conversion on the Damascus road* is the presupposition of this re-evaluation of 'fleshly' values" (1991: 384, my italics; cf. Martin 1976: 130; Lang TDNT 7: 446).

Paul, however, does not mention his experience on the Damascus road in Phil. 3:2-11. Moreover, Paul does not devalue the importance of Jewish advantages as *such*, but rather claims that these advantages have nothing to do with righteousness.

[75]. Sanders suggests that in Phil. 3:7, Paul is arguing in "black and white" terms which state that "once a greater good appears, what was formerly good is regarded not just as second best, but as 'loss'" and that "what is surpassingly valuable becomes ... what is exclusively valuable" (1983: 139-141). Sanders also suggests that Paul regards his Jewish past as "loss", because now that the new dispensation of Christ has come, the old dispensation of the law is no longer valid (cf. 1983: 140).

According to the context, however, Paul is not fighting with his past, but rather with his opponents. What his opponents insist is that the membership of the covenant community is the most important element for salvation. Paul, on the other hand, claims that membership of the covenant community has nothing to do with "righteousness". Therefore, it is a different *function*, not a different *dispensation*, that leads Paul to regard his Jewish advantages as worthless. In other words, Paul asserts that Jewish advantages are not the condition of becoming a member of the community of God's people.



[76]. O'Brien indicates that the aorist subjunctive of κερδαίνω suggests that Paul "is looking forward to the day of Christ" (1991: 391; cf. Hawthorne 1983: 140). It is more likely, however, that what Paul has in mind is the present rather than the future, because it is difficult to say that Paul *now* regards Jewish advantages as worthless in order to win Christ in the *future*. Χριστὸν κερδαίνειν is best understood in the light of the following: εὐρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ (Χριστῷ).

[77]. Εὐρίσκω also means (1) "to find after search", (2) "to find accidentally", (3) "to fetch (money)", (4) "to obtain", (5) "spiritual or intellectual discovery, perception, insight, understanding, on the basis of deliberations, investigations or demonstration", (6) "to show oneself" or "to prove oneself" (Preisner TDNT 2: 769). The verb is sometimes used to mean finding Jesus in the Gospels (Mk. 1:37: καὶ εὗρον αὐτὸν καὶ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ ὅτι πάντες ζητοῦσιν σε.; cf. Lk. 2:12; Jn. 1:41,45).

[78]. Similarly, Martin explains εὐρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ in a juridical sense. He defines this term as "enjoying the new status of a man cleared of guilt and accepted in God's presence", i.e., "being found in Christ at the last day of divine judgment" (1976: 131).

[79]. Bultmann says:

"In the passage Phil. 3:8ff., which ... contains Gnostic expressions, Paul undoubtedly borrows from the Gnostics in describing the γνῶσις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ as a distinctive mark of the Christian. But this γνῶσις corresponds to the resolve to renounce πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί (v. 4ff.) and consists in the knowledge of Christ as the Lord" (TDNT 1: 710).

[80]. In the Old Testament, γνῶσις is "a practical knowledge of the laws of life and of the world, based upon experience" (von Rad 1975: 418; cf. Eichrodt 1967: 81). The verb, γινώσκειν, means to come to know, or to learn to know. It refers to "the act in which man comprehends the objects and circumstances of his world" (Bultmann TDNT 1: 697 and fn. 31; e.g., Isa. 42:25). More often, "knowledge" refers to (1) the acknowledgment of the acts of God (e.g., Isa. 41:20), (2) the recognition that God is the Lord (e.g., Jer. 16:21) and (3) the confession and the response given to God by obeying his will (e.g., Jer. 9:3), by fear of God (e.g., Isa. 11:2), by doing what is right and just (e.g., Jer. 22:16; cf. Bultmann TDNT 1: 698) and by obeying the law (e.g., Ps. 119:97ff.; cf. Eichrodt 1967: 90f.).

[81]. Paul's opponents' "membership legalism" emphasizes that one is saved by membership of the covenantal community and that circumcision is the most important symbol of that membership. Paul, on the other hand, insists that it is faith in Christ, not circumcision, that is essential to becoming a member of God's people. The question is how to become a member of the community of God's people. It is, therefore, fair to suggest that δικαιοσύνη here is a "transfer term".

[82]. Many commentators suggest that the difference between the two righteousnesses is merit as opposed to grace. They, therefore, explain ἐμὴ δικαιοσύνη ἐκ νόμου as "self-righteousness", referring to "Paul's own moral achievement, gained by obeying the law and intended to establish a claim upon God, particularly in view of the final judgment" (O'Brien 1991: 394f.; cf. Martin 1976: 132; Hawthorne 1983: 140f.; Furnish 1968: 137).

Sanders, however, indicates that the difference "is not the distinction between merit and grace, but between two dispensations" and that the righteousness which comes from the law is no longer of worth only "because of a different dispensation"



(1983: 140). Sanders defines δικαιοσύνη ἐκ νόμου as "self-righteousness" and explains it as the righteousness "available to the Jews alone on the basis of observing the law", i.e., the "righteousness which the Jews alone are privileged to obtain" (1983: 38).

Watson also claims that what Paul renounces in Phil. 3:7ff. is not human achievement, but rather Paul's "whole covenant-status as a Jew", because in Phil. 3 observance of the law is said "to take place as a response to the privileges given by God to Israel" (1986: 78). Watson suggests that the contrast is between "two different ways of life in two different communities: the Jewish community, with its allegiance to the law, and the Pauline congregations, with their allegiance to Christ" (*ibid.*). Räisänen, following Watson, argues that what Paul renounces is "not human achievement, but the biblical covenant" (1987a: 410). Räisänen, then, explains the antithesis between the two righteousnesses as "not having the righteousness connected with God's ancient *covenant with Israel*, but the righteousness connected with the *Christ event*" (1987a: 410, his italics).

It is, however, unlikely that Paul has renounced his Jewish advantages *as such*, including his covenant status (see [2.1.3]). It is more likely that what Paul wants to emphasize is the proper *function* of the covenantal privilege. Paul consistently insists that circumcision and other advantages are given by God particularly to Jews. To have them is their honour, to keep them is their responsibility, but they function only as a response to God's grace, not as a guarantee of salvation. Paul's opponents hold the conviction of "membership legalism", that is, that one can be saved by membership of the covenantal community. This is what Paul renounces.

[83]. Paul claims that the righteousness under the law was *his* righteousness, because he had genuinely shared the convictions of the Pharisees before he became a Christian. The righteousness referred to here is in accordance with the conviction of "membership legalism".

[84]. In general usage, the adjective δίκαιος describes a person "who conforms, who is civilised, who observes custom" (Schrenk TDNT 2: 182), while the noun δικαιοσύνη refers to "the civil virtue of observance of law and fulfilment of duty" (Schrenk TDNT 2: 192). These terms are used in the Old Testament with similar meaning. Because all social relationships and all human duties have been specified in the law (*cf.* Quell TDNT 2: 174), the adjective δίκαιος illustrates one who has fulfilled his duties as expressed in the law and who therefore can stand before God (*cf.* Schrenk TDNT 2: 185).

The noun δικαιοσύνη, on the other hand, is understood in the framework of the covenant. In the covenant relationship, God's duty is to guide and protect Israel, while Israel's obligation is to obey God's commandments, the law and particularly the Decalogue. As a result, God's righteousness is God's doing *his* duty, while Israel's righteousness is in doing *hers*, that is, in observing the law. This is "covenant righteousness" (*cf.* Ziesler 1989: 70; Best 1967: 15). For example, in Lk. 1:6, John the Baptist's parents are described thus: ἦσαν δὲ δίκαιοι ἀμφοτέροι ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ, πορευόμενοι ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐντολαῖς καὶ δικαιώμασιν τοῦ κυρίου ἀμεμπτοι. Δίκαιος here likely refers to Jewish piety (*cf.* Nolland 1989: 26). The second part of the verse gives a good definition of δίκαιος: conformity with God's will as expressed in the law (*cf.* Fitzmyer 1981: 322; Davies and Allison 1988: 202).

In short, a righteous Jew is a Jew who observes the law properly.

[85]. The new righteousness in Phil. 3:9 is described as ἡ ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει. O'Brien defines ἡ δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ as "God's faithfulness to his covenant promises to Abraham" (1991: 398). He regards ἡ ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη as different from ἡ δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ and expresses the former as the "status of being right with God that he has now as a gift and will continue to have until the time when he is perfectly united with Christ" (1991: 397). It is,

however, very unlikely that there is any clear difference between these terms as most commentators suggest.

[86]. There are three main lines of interpretation regarding δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ: (1) the first regards θεοῦ in the phrase, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, as an "objective genitive" ("the righteousness given to man by God and which counts before God", Brauch 1977: 524; cf. Baur 1876: 135f.), (2) the second as a "genitive of the author" or "genitive of origin" ("God's righteousness is the righteousness which comes from God, which is given to man and which is the basis of man's relationship with God", Brauch 1977: 525; cf. Bultmann 1952: 285, 273; Bornkamm 1971: 138; Cranfield 1975: 97) and (3) the third as a "subjective genitive" ("God's own righteousness, describing either his being ... or his action ... or both his being and action", Brauch 1977: 524; cf. Käsemann 1969a: 172-182; *idem* 1980:29f.; Achtemeier 1985: 64; Conzelmann 1968: 182; *idem* 1969: 217f.; Kümmel 1973: 196-198; Ziesler 1972: 186f.; *idem* 1989: 70; Barrett 1991: 31; Dunn 1988: 15-17; Black 1989: 33; Williams 1980: 265, 278; Campbell 1992: 160-162, 165; Fitzmyer 1990: 834; *idem* 1990a: 1390f.; Wedderburn 1988: 122).

The meaning of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Paul is best understood in the context of his own writings. In Rom. 1:16, Paul says that δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is δύναμις θεοῦ ... εἰς σωτηρίαν. In the Old Testament, God's δύναμις refers to God's mighty acts in history (cf. Grundmann TDNT 2: 290-294). This power is often connected with God's deliverance of Israel from the nations (e.g., Ex. 15:6), or with the Exodus (e.g., Ex. 32:11). Paul, however, frequently connects δύναμις θεοῦ with God's saving power in the Christ event (cf. Grundmann TDNT 2: 305-310). The Christ event includes Jesus' crucifixion (1 Cor. 1:18: ὁ λόγος γὰρ ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ ... δύναμις θεοῦ ἐστίν) and particularly his resurrection (in Rom. 1:4 he speaks of τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει ... ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν, 1 Cor. 6:14: ὁ δὲ θεὸς καὶ τὸν κύριον ἡγείρεν ... διὰ τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ). Therefore, Paul says that Christ is θεοῦ δύναμις (1 Cor. 1:24).

The fundamental idea of σωτηρία is "any kind of deliverance from physical danger and death" (Black 1989: 29). In the Old Testament, it normally refers to Yahweh's great deliverance of Israel from Egypt and Babylon (cf. *ibid.*; Ziesler 1989: 69; Ex. 14:13; 15:1f.; Isa. 45:17). For Paul, however, σωτηρία is primarily eschatological: the hope of deliverance in the final judgment from the wrath of God and of entrance into the new aeon (cf. Käsemann 1980: 22; Cranfield 1975: 89; Ziesler 1989: 69; Dunn 1988: 39; Barrett 1991: 28; Rom. 5:9: πολλὰ οὖν μᾶλλον δικαιοσύνες νῦν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ σωθησόμεθα δι' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς).

When Paul connects δύναμις θεοῦ with σωτηρία in Rom 1:16, it is, therefore, likely that he has in mind the Jewish concept of God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt and Babylon. To this he adds God's current deliverance in Christ. This enables him to claim that *the death and the resurrection of Christ is God's saving power for all, just like God's great deliverance of Israel from Egypt and Babylon.*

Paul's view of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ stems, it seems, from the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, "righteousness" is not "abstract ethical ideas" (Eichrodt 1961: 249), nor a "forensic conception" (von Rad 1962: 370, fn.2). Von Rad, following Cremer, claims that righteousness denotes a "real relationship between two parties" (1962: 371). Therefore, a just man is "one who measures up to the particular claims which this relationship lays upon him" (1962: 372). In the light of this understanding, the righteousness of Yahweh is not a norm, but acts which bestow salvation (cf. 1962: 373). In other words, God's righteousness means that "he stands on Israel's side and in his action avows himself to her" (1962: 372).

Eichrodt finds that the basic meaning of *mišpāt* is "the rights and duties of each party arising out of the particular relation of fellowship in which they find themselves" (1961: 241). *Mišpāt* frequently also denotes the execution of justice

(cf. *ibid.*). It can, therefore, refer to "a loyalty manifested in the concrete relationships of community" (1961: 249). In the context of the Old Testament, the relationship is the covenant relation. To be righteous is to fulfil the obligations which arise from covenant relationship.

In the light of these understandings, God's righteousness is his keeping of the covenant relationship, his fulfilment of the role of the covenant God (cf. Eichrodt 1961: 240, 244). This is embodied in the divine intervention in history. When the covenant people are under foreign pressure, Yahweh appears as the "protector": he "watches over the 'justice' of his people in that he safeguards their existence by his victories over their foes ... Israel's triumphs in war are therefore proofs of the righteousness of God" (1961: 242). Thus Yahweh's righteousness are the "redemptive acts by which he proposed to restore the covenant people" (1961: 246). Isa. 45:8 is a good example of the way in which Yahweh's righteousness constitutes Israel's salvation.

To sum up, Paul is very likely adopting a tradition from the Old Testament and regards the genitive, θεοῦ, in the phrase, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, as a "subjective genitive". Paul is speaking, that is, of God's faithfulness in keeping the covenant, in protecting and delivering his people.

[87]. The occurrence of γνῶσις in Rom. 10:2f. is striking. This indicates the close relationship between Phil. 3:7-9 and Rom. 10:2f. In Phil. 3:7-9, Paul says that he regards Jewish righteousness as "loss", because he has the γνῶσις that God's saving righteousness has been accomplished in Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Therefore he chooses the right way to reach salvation. In Rom. 10:2f., on the other hand, Paul accuses his opponents of not having such γνῶσις. Therefore τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑπετάγησαν; they insist on going the wrong way.

As in Phil. 3:7-9, so also in Rom. 10:3, righteousness is a "transfer term" (cf. Sanders 1983: 43). Sanders defines "God's righteousness" as the righteousness "through Christ, available on the basis of faith to all on equal footing" which stands against the Jewish way of righteousness, "the righteousness available to the Jew alone on the basis of observing the law" (1983: 37f.; cf. Ziesler 1989: 255; Dunn 1988: 587).

There are two schools of interpretation regarding the phrase, ἰδίᾳ δικαιοσύνῃ, in Rom. 10:3. The first understands it as a righteousness which is not a gift from God, but a claim upon him, i.e., the earning of God's favour by human deeds (cf. Best 1967: 118; Black 1989: 141; Cranfield 1979: 515; Barrett 1991: 183). The second explains ἰδίᾳ δικαιοσύνῃ in terms of covenantal nomism and the inclusion of the Gentiles. Dunn claims that "ἰδιος has more the sense of 'mine' as belonging to me in contrast to what someone else can claim as belonging to him" (1988: 587). Therefore, ἰδίᾳ δικαιοσύνῃ means "Israel's covenant-consciousness, righteousness as the appropriate expression of their covenant status, and so peculiarly theirs" (1988: 587; cf. Sanders 1983: 38; Ziesler 1989: 256). This concept excludes the Gentiles from salvation (cf. Howard 1969: 336; Ziesler 1989: 256).

It is very likely, therefore, that "their own righteousness" in Rom. 10:3 is the same as "my own righteousness" in Phil. 3:9 (cf. Sanders 1983: 44). Both refer to the "membership legalism" of Paul's opponents.

[88]. The question has been raised: if a Jew becomes a member of God's people by faith, does Paul think that Jews before Christ were *not* God's people? Paul clearly claims that his contemporary non-Christian Jews are not God's people (Rom. 9-11). He does not, however, explain the position of Jews before Christ. Perhaps this is precisely Paul's theological problem: if God has given the law, why does he also send his son (cf. Räisänen 1987: 264f.)? According to Paul's theology as a whole, however, it is highly likely that Paul regarded those Jews living before Christ as God's people, if they had "faith", that is, if they confessed Yahweh as Lord and



obeyed his commandments. Paul does not consider contemporary non-Christian Jews as God's people, because they do not have "faith", that is, "faith in Christ". In other words, before Christ "faith" meant confessing Yahweh as Lord and obeying his will, while after Christ, "faith" has been defined anew as "faith in Christ".

[89]. See 2 *Apoc. Bar.* 75:5-7:

"or who of those born can hope to arrive at these things, apart from those to whom you are merciful and *gracious*? For if you were not merciful to men, those who are under your right hand, they were not able to come to them, apart from those who are named among the famous number. But who exist, when we know why we have come, and then subject ourselves to him who brought us *out of Egypt*."

[90]. In the LXX, the Hebrew word *hesed*, a synonym for *hen*, is normally translated as *ἐλεος*. *Ἐλεος* is often used to express Yahweh's covenant grace to his people (cf. Zimmerli *TDNT* 9: 383, 386). For example, Deut. 7:9: Καὶ γνώση, ὅτι Κύριος ὁ θεός σου, οὗτος θεός. Θεὸς πιστὸς, ὁ φυλάσσων διαθήκην καὶ ἐλεος τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτὸν καὶ τοῖς φυλάσσουσιν τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ εἰς χιλιάς γενεάς. In Ex. 20:5f., *ἐλεος* is used in the Decalogue: Οὐ προσκυνήσεις αὐτοῖς, οὐδὲ μὴ λατρεύσεις αὐτοῖς. ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι Κύριος ὁ θεός σου, θεὸς ζῆλωτης, ἀποδιδούς ἀμαρτίαν πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα, ἕως τρίτης καὶ τετάρτης γενεάς τοῖς μισοῦσί με, καὶ ποιῶν ἐλεος εἰς χιλιάδας τοῖς ἀγαπῶσί με, καὶ τοῖς φυλάσσουσιν τὰ προστάγματά μου.

[91]. There is a debate about whether or not the concept of ἀπολύτρωσις includes the idea of ransoming. Moo defines ἀπολύτρωσις as "an act of ransoming" which means that Christ's death is "a 'ransom,' a 'payment' that takes the place of that penalty for sins owed by all people to God" (1991: 229f.; cf. Sanday and Headlam 1902: 86; Morris 1955: 9-26; Murray 1959: 115f.). Barrett claims that "the connection with blood and death suggests that ἀπολύτρωσις has not lost its original sense of 'ransoming'" (1991: 73; cf. 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23: ἡγοράσθητε τιμῆς).

Some scholars, however, claim that it is not necessary to include the idea of ransoming in ἀπολύτρωσις (cf. Käsemann 1980: 96; Black 1989: 59; Büchsel *TDNT* 4: 355). Marshall draws our attention to the distinction between "price" and "cost" and claims that redemption should not refer to a "price" when "Yahweh is the subject and the theme is the deliverance of His people" (1974: 153f., fn. 4). His distinction between "price" and "cost" is that the term 'price' is used in "those cases where some *payment* or exchange is *received* by the person from whom the captive is delivered", while the term 'cost' is used of "whatever *expenditure* of money, life and effort is *demand*ed on the part of the redeemer" (*ibid.*, his italics). Cranfield, on the other hand, suggests that it is best to leave the question *open*, because both interpretations are possible (cf. 1975: 207).

It is very likely that what Paul has in mind when he uses ἀπολύτρωσις in Rom. 3:24 is not ransom, but rather God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt and Babylon (cf. Ziesler 1989: 111).

[92]. There is a debate about whether ἱλαστήριον means "expiation" or "propitiation"? Ziesler explains that "propitiation" means doing something in order to avert the wrath of God so that the object is God, while "expiation" refers to the removal of man's sin and so makes sinners the object (cf. 1989: 112). Dodd points out that in the LXX, ἱλασκέσθαι and its cognates do not refer to propitiating the deity, but refer to the performance of an act whereby sin and defilement are removed. Consequently, in Rom. 3:25, ἱλαστήριον refers to expiation rather than propitiation (cf. 1931: 360). Manson maintains that ἱλαστήριον refers to the "mercy seat" and means "either 'an expiatory place or object', the point at which or the instrument by means of which man expiates his sins, or 'the place where God shows mercy to men'" (1945: 4).

Morris, on the other hand, criticises Dodd and argues that ἱλασκέσθαι in the Old Testament refers to removal of the wrath of God (cf. 1950-1: 227; Ex. 32:14: "And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people"). Morris also disagrees with Manson and says that ἱλαστήριον in Rom. 3:25 means "the removal of the wrath of God, rather than a specific reference either to the mercy-seat, or to the Day of Atonement ceremonies" (1955-6: 43). The reason he gives is the following:

"The context [of Rom. 3:25] demands that ἱλαστήριον should include an element of propitiation in its meaning, for St. Paul has brought heavy artillery to bear in demonstrating that God's wrath and judgment are against the sinners ... there is nothing other than this word to express the averting of the wrath" (1950-1: 232; cf. Hill 1967: 40ff.).

Whiteley, however, criticises Morris and explains that:

"God's hatred of sin can be 'propitiated' only by the abolition of sin. Christ deals with sin, not by throwing a cloth over the eyes of God, but by setting us, at the cost of his own life, in a relationship within which sin can be done away" (1957: 255; cf. Barrett 1991: 74: "expiation has ... the effect of propitiation").

ἱλαστήριον in Rom. 3:25 most likely refers to "expiation" which includes the meaning "propitiation", that is, the removal of man's sin, after which the wrath of God may be removed. Cranfield indicates that ἱλαστήριον is used of the *kappōret* or mercy seat in 21 out of its 27 occurrences in the LXX and in its only other occurrence Heb. 9:5: ὑπεράνω δὲ αὐτῆς Χερουβὶν δόξης κατασκιάζοντα τὸ ἱλαστήριον (cf. 1975: 214).

[93]. It is very difficult to make a clear distinction between "sin offering" (*ḥat.t.ā'ī*) and "guilt offering" (*'āšām*). De Vaux explains:

"Whatever we make of the literary analysis, the juxtaposition in Leviticus of prescriptions which are often parallel concerning the *ḥat.t.ā'ī* and *'āšām*, and the resultant confusion, show that the last redactors no longer knew exactly what specified the *ḥat.t.ā'ī* and the *'āšām*; or else they wanted to distinguish terms which were originally synonymous, or they confused the terms whose exact force they no longer knew" (1964: 102; cf. von Rad 1975: 259).

Sanders also claims that "sin offerings and guilt offerings are closely related" and that "it is possible to classify the guilt offering as a special category of sin offering" (1992: 107). It is, therefore, not necessary to distinguish "sin offering" from "guilt offering". When I employ "sin offering", I adopt the broad meaning of this term which can include the concept of "guilt offering".

[94]. Black suggests that "by his blood" should be connected with "by faith", which means that "it is our faith in the sacrifice of Christ which atones" (1989: 62). Most commentators, however, claim that "by his blood" is best connected with ἱλαστήριον, which means that it was "by means of the shedding of His blood that ... Christ was to be ἱλαστήριον" (Cranfield 1975: 210; cf. Sanday and Headlam 1902: 89; Ziesler 1989: 115; Barrett 1991: 74).

[95]. Pabee claims that ἱλαστήριον in Rom. 3:25 does not refer to the "mercy seat", but rather refers to a "sin offering". Consequently, "Christ's death is that which expiates or is an expiatory sacrifice" (1985: 63). This is precisely the function of the "mercy seat" on the Day of Atonement.

[96]. According to Acts 6, the "Hellenists" are accused of attacking the law and the Temple (Acts 6:11). Hengel explains the basis of these attacks as follows:

"the death of the crucified Messiah, who had vicariously taken upon himself the curse of the Law, had made the Temple obsolete as a place of everlasting atonement for the sins of Israel, and therefore the ritual

Law had lost its significance as necessary institution for salvation" (1986: 232; for an earlier stage in this question, see Sanders 1985: 61-90).

Kilgallen examines Stephen's speech in Acts 7 and points out that what Stephen attacks is not the Temple *as such*, but rather the wrong concept of the Temple as the "house" of God, or more precisely, the concept which claims that the Most High is "housed" in the Temple (*cf.* 1989: 177f.; Acts 7:48). Moreover, Stephen accuses the Sanhedrin of being always opposed to the Holy Spirit (*cf.* 1989: 180, 192; Acts 7:51). As a result, according to Kilgallen, God will punish wrongdoing (against the Holy Spirit) and the wrong understanding of the Temple (as a house which can restrict God) by the destruction of the Temple (*cf.* 1989: 180). Paul very likely shares these concepts with the "Hellenists" and therefore maintains that through his death, Christ has become a "new Temple".



## CHAPTER THREE

### PAUL'S MISSIONARY TACTICS (2):

#### FOR THE GENTILES

Paul is an apostle to the Gentiles. The Gentile mission is certainly his main concern. Accordingly, a great proportion of his epistles, Galatians and Romans in particular, deals with the question: *how* can Gentiles become members of God's people? Here, Paul is once again fighting against his opponents' "membership legalism" which asserts that one is saved only by virtue of membership of the covenant community and that those Gentiles who intend to become members of God's people must observe the law, circumcision in particular. Paul disagrees with his opponents and maintains that salvation comes from God's saving action in Jesus' death and resurrection. Therefore observance of the law, including circumcision, is not necessary for Gentiles in order that they might become members of God's people.

### Paul's Missionary Tactics

Paul's missionary tactics for the Gentiles are (1) that the law is not an appropriate way for Gentiles to become members of God's people and (2) that faith in Christ is the only condition for Gentiles to participate in the community of God's people. This can be supported by Paul's use of the Abraham story in Gal. 3 and Rom. 4.

McCarter claims that the Abraham story stands at the "beginning of the patriarchal traditions" (1988: 341). The patriarchal tradition serves as a social and ethnic definition which situates the Israelite people among the other peoples of the ancient Near East. It does so by means of a genealogy (*cf.* 1988: 341f.). B.W. Anderson maintains that the genealogies in Genesis indicate "a movement from the universal to the particular" (1988: 354), *i.e.*, from the creation of the universe to the calling of an individual man, Abraham. The purpose of setting the Abraham story in Gen. 12-25 is, therefore, to place Abraham "in the spacious context of world history, beginning with the creation" (*ibid.*). In other words, the Abraham story serves as a new beginning which reflects God's solution for human sin and failure in Gen. 1-11 (*cf.* 1988: 353). Paul seems to have this tradition in mind, because he often identifies Christ with Abraham (Gal. 3:16) and claims that Christ is the solution for the human sin brought into the world by Adam (Rom. 5:12-21).

The whole tradition of the patriarchs was perhaps a "later contribution to the stock of Israelite traditions" (Noth 1960: 126). It is likely that most patriarchs and their narratives were originally limited to particular clans or tribes (*cf. ibid.*; McCarter 1988: 343-351). Abraham, however, appears in the Bible only as a

personal name with no connection with tribe or clan. This is possibly because "Abraham was a historical individual before he became a subject of tradition and legend" (McCarter 1988: 351). Noth suggests that all patriarchal tradition, including the Abraham story, belonged to the "Aramaeian migration" of the 19th-18th centuries B.C. in Mesopotamia and in Syria-Palestine (*cf.* 1960: 124)<sup>1</sup> and that the patriarchal tradition was finally adopted and incorporated into Israelite tradition by the "Israelite confederation of the twelve tribes" (1960: 121, 127).<sup>2</sup>

In Genesis, Abraham is not described as a man who trusts in God's promise, as Paul emphasizes, but rather as a hero of obedient faith: "God issues a command and one responds obediently" (B.W. Anderson 1988: 358).<sup>3</sup> In Judaism, Abraham is a "national and religious hero of the people", someone who faithfully obeys what God commands (Jeremias *TDNT* 1: 8; *cf.* Dibelius 1976: 161-163; Martin 1988: 90f.; Dunn 1988: 196; Longenecker 1990: 111), for example, *Jub.* 23:10: "Abraham was perfect in all his deeds with the Lord, and well-pleasing in righteousness all the days of his life" and, most strikingly, *Sir.* 44:19-21:

"Abraham was the great father of a multitude of nations,  
and no one has been found like him in glory.  
He kept the law of the Most High,  
and entered into a covenant with him;  
he certified the covenant in his flesh,  
and when he was tested he proved faithful.  
Therefore the Lord assured him with an oath  
that the nations would be blessed  
through his offspring;  
that he would make him  
as numerous as the dust of the earth,  
and exalt his offspring like the stars,  
and give them an inheritance from sea to sea  
and from the Euphrates to the ends of the earth."

Abraham was, therefore, often affectionately called "a bag of myrrh" (*e.g.*, *Cant. Rab.* 1:13: "just as myrrh is the most excellent of spices, so Abraham was the chief of all righteous men" *cit.* Longenecker 1990: 110).

The sacrifice of Isaac is frequently regarded as the most testing example of Abraham's obedience (*cf.* Betz 1979: 139; Baird 1988: 368; Longenecker 1990: 110; Achtemeier 1985: 78; Jeremias *TDNT* 1: 8; *Jas.* 2:21: Ἀβραάμ ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν οὐκ

ἐξ ἔργων ἐδικαιώθη ἀνευέγκας Ἰσαὰκ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ  
θυσιαστήριον;).<sup>4</sup>

Paul, however, interprets Abraham very differently. "He lays all of the emphasis on Abraham as being righteous by faith in response to the promise of God, apart from any effort of his own to keep the law" (Longenecker 1990: 111; cf. Achtemeier 1985: 78). As a result, Paul applies Gen. 15:6 to Gal. 3:6 and Rom. 4:3, 9, 22. He also denies the validity of the law, because he regards the Jewish law as given 430 years later than the promise (Gal. 3:17). Abraham, according to Paul's interpretation, is "the prototype of the Gentile-Christian believer" (Betz 1979: 139). Hansen maintains:

"Paul's basic objective is to redefine the key terms of the Abraham story in such a way that Gentile believers are identified as the sons of Abraham and separated from the advocates of the law (οἱ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου). This severance of the advocates of the law from the Galatian churches depends on the dissociation of the Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic law ... The Galatian converts are left without any sound reason for turning from the gospel (= Abrahamic covenantal promise) to the Mosaic law" (1989: 156).

### 3.1.1 Faith and not the law

Sanders claims that "righteousness by faith is not any one doctrine" and that it "serves primarily as a negative argument against keeping the law as sufficient or necessary for salvation". Therefore the "positive definition of what it means to be 'righteous' by faith is not precisely given" (1977: 492). In other words, "righteousness is not by the law", rather than "righteousness by faith", is Paul's main statement. What Paul rejects is the Jewish understanding of salvation, namely, righteousness by the law (cf. Baur 1876: 137; Betz 1979: 116). In this section, I would like to examine Paul's tactics towards the Gentiles by citing the evidence of Gal. 3:6-9, 15-18; 5:2-5 and Rom. 4:9-15.

## Galatians 3:6-9

Betz maintains that Galatians, according to Graeco-Roman rhetoric and epistolography, is an example of the "apologetic letter" which includes the genres of autobiography and apologetic speech (*cf.* 1979: 14f.; 1975: 354). As an "apologetic letter", the message of Galatians is set in the context of an ongoing debate in a court of law: the Galatians are the jury, Paul's opponents are the accusers and Paul himself is the defendant (*cf.* Betz 1979: 24).<sup>5</sup> It is, therefore, necessary to identify Paul's opponents and their accusations in order to understand the main points of the debate and the defence Paul wants to make.

It is generally accepted that Paul's opponents in Galatia are "Jewish Christian Judaizers" (*cf.* Burton 1921: livf.; Guthrie 1973: 10f.; Kümmel 1975: 298-301; Betz 1979: 7; Bruce 1982: 25; Barrett 1985: 25; Fung 1988: 7; Longenecker 1990: c; Howard 1990: 2, 11, 17, 19).<sup>6</sup> As a result, Paul's opponents do not argue against "faith in Christ" (*cf.* Sanders 1977: 445; *idem* 1983: 19; Bultmann *TDNT* 6: 203-219; Cousar 1982: 5f.), but insist that Gentile converts may enter the community of God's people only on condition of being circumcised (*cf.* Sanders 1983: 18f., 50 fn. 10; Baird 1988: 374; Burton 1921: 274; Longenecker 1990: c; Guthrie 1973: 11f.; Howard 1990: xiv, 19; Fung 1988: 8; Bruce 1982: 27; Cousar 1982: 5f.; Barclay 1987: 88).<sup>7</sup>

Abraham's acceptance of circumcision in Gen. 17 is probably used by Paul's opponents in order to persuade Paul's converts to undertake circumcision (*cf.* Hansen 1989: 172). Abraham, therefore, becomes "the progenitor of the people and the recipient of circumcision" (Baird 1988: 374; *cf.* Brinsmead 1982: 107-114). It is likely that the circumcision question forms the basis of one of the accusations made against Paul by his opponents. This accusation, Sanders "imagines" thus:

"What you are saying to them destroys their only hope; they become persuaded by you that they will inherit the promises to Abraham when they do not even *begin* to keep God's covenant with him, the sign of

which is circumcision" (1991: 62, his italics; cf. Hansen 1989: 155; Baird 1988: 373).<sup>8</sup>

If Sanders is correct, Paul's opponents very likely subscribed to "membership legalism" (see [2.1.2] on Rom. 2:25-29). Those who held "membership legalism" claimed that membership of the covenant community was the most important element for salvation and that circumcision was the most significant symbol of belonging to that community. They possibly also saw the Christian movement as a sect within Judaism. They, therefore, insisted that without accepting circumcision and becoming members of the Jewish covenant community, Gentiles could not become God's people.

Consequently, Paul has to defend the gospel he has preached among the Gentiles, namely that God intends to justify Gentiles by means of faith rather than by Jewish law (cf. Gaston 1987e: 73). Paul's attitude to the law in Galatians, therefore, is not against the law and its works *as such*, but against the requirement laid upon the Gentiles by his opponents to observe Mosaic law, circumcision in particular, in order to become members of God's people. Paul emphasizes that Gentiles have to be brought into the community of God's people not by observing the law, but by "faith in Christ" alone (cf. Sanders 1983: 18-20). To achieve this goal, Paul argues that the true descendants of Abraham are not those who observe the law, but rather those who have faith (οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, Gal. 3:6-9). Since the law was given long after the promise made to Abraham, the law, therefore, cannot overturn that promise (Gal. 3:15-18).

Gal. 3-4, according to Betz's analysis, is the *probatio* section of an epistle in which "proofs" from Scripture are presented in order to "establish credibility for the defense by a system of arguments" (1979: 137f.).<sup>9</sup> In Gal. 3:6-9, Paul says:

Καθὼς Ἀβραὰμ ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην· γινώσκετε ἄρα ὅτι οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, οὗτοι υἱοὶ εἰσιν Ἀβραάμ. προῖδούσα δὲ ἡ γραφὴ ὅτι ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοὶ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ θεός, προεὐηγγελίσατο τῷ Ἀβραάμ ὅτι ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη· ὥστε οἱ ἐκ πίστεως εὐλογοῦνται σὺν τῷ πιστῷ Ἀβραάμ.

The theme of the paragraph is this: who are the true "descendants of Abraham"?



In Judaism, Abraham was always called the "father of the race" (Dunn 1988: 199), *i.e.*, "the progenitor of Israel, the ancestor of the people of God" (Baird 1988: 368; Jos. *Wars* 5:380: "What did Abraham our προπάτωρ then do?"; Jas. 2:21: Ἀβραάμ ὁ πατήρ ἡμῶν, Sir. 44:19: Abraham was once called "great father of a multitude of nations"). Paul also calls him τὸν προπάτορα ἡμῶν κατὰ σάρκα (Rom. 4:1). For this reason, Israel is naturally called "the seed or children of Abraham" (Baird 1988: 368; Ps. 105:6: "O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones"; Isa. 41:8: "But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend"). To belong to the "descendants of Abraham", therefore, is a "mark of distinction" or a "mark of identity". It is "to belong to the people whom God has chosen" (Baird 1988: 368f.). To be a "son of Abraham", therefore, is essential for salvation (Lk. 19:9). This identity was very important in Paul's time, because the Jews had to distinguish themselves from the Hellenistic environment in which they found themselves (*cf.* Baird 1988: 369).

This conviction was probably first used by Paul's opponents against him (*cf.* Burton 1921: 156; Longenecker 1990: 114). Paul's opponents may well have employed Gen. 17:2-9 in order to interpret Abraham's covenant as:

"an everlasting covenant with Abraham and his seed throughout their generations, a covenant of blessing on God's part and obligation on their part ... every male among you shall be circumcised" (Burton 1921: 157).

Consequently, Paul's opponents probably maintained that "those who wanted to be true sons of Abraham and heirs of the promises must do as Abraham did and be circumcised" (Sanders 1983: 18; *cf.* Eichrodt 1961: 39; Bruce 1982: 155; Beker 1980: 48).

For Paul, however, the inclusion of the Gentiles as heirs of Abraham and therefore as heirs of the promise made to Abraham, is essential for salvation history (*cf.* Bruce 1982: 154; Käsemann 1971b: 74ff.; Sutherland 1991: 443). Paul, therefore, rejects his opponents' physical definition of the "descendants of Abraham" (*cf.* Burton 1921: 158) and identifies οἱ ἐκ πίστεως as the true "descendants of

Abraham". He quotes Gen. 12:3; 18:18 and 15:6 in order to prove that his concept is true, thereby giving it the authority of Scripture (*cf.* Betz 1979: 141).

Paul's words in Gal. 3:6 are quoted almost exactly from the LXX text of Gen. 15:6 (καὶ ἐπίστευσεν Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην).<sup>10</sup> There are three key words in Gen. 15:6: "believed", "reckoned" and "righteousness".<sup>11</sup> Paul, however, re-interprets Gen. 15:6. He does so by removing any reference in Gen. 15:6 and Gen. 17, 22 to Abraham's circumcision and obedience. Rather, he focuses solely on his "faith" in order to demonstrate that Abraham is a man of faith (*cf.* Beker 1980: 95f.). This argument enables Paul to claim that because Abraham is a "man of faith" (ἐκ πίστεως), οἱ ἐκ πίστεως are the true υἱοὶ Ἀβραάμ in Gal. 3:7 (*cf.* Burton 1921: 158f.; Betz 1979: 141f.).

Paul's opponents obviously understand υἱοὶ Ἀβραάμ in a physical sense: they are "sons of Abraham" by blood or lineage.<sup>12</sup> Paul, on the other hand, uses υἱοί in a figurative way and interprets it as "those who are bound to a personality by close, non-material ties" (BAGD: 833f. *s.v.* υἱός 1cγ). It is this usage that enables Paul to identify οἱ ἐκ πίστεως as υἱοὶ Ἀβραάμ, because Paul probably understands Abraham to be the first person to have a relationship with God based on faith (*cf. ibid.*). Οἱ ἐκ πίστεως means "those whose existence before God is based upon ... faith" (Betz 1979: 141; *cf.* Burton 1921: 155; Longenecker 1990: 114). Paul, however, seems not to give a clear definition of what "faith" is in Galatians,<sup>13</sup> though he does so in Rom. 4:3-5, 17-25. Consequently, οἱ ἐκ πίστεως is possibly used in contrast to οἱ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου in Gal. 3:10 and to οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς in Gal. 2:12 (*cf.* Betz 1979: 141f.).<sup>14</sup>

In Gal. 3:8, Paul quotes Scripture again: ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη. This quotation is probably cited from Gen. 12:3 and conflated with Gen. 18:18 (*cf.* Baird 1988: 374; Bruce 1982: 156).<sup>15</sup> According to Gen. 12:3, Abraham becomes "a mediator of blessing in God's saving plan" in history (von Rad 1972: 160). This blessing is given not only to Israel, but also to "all the families on the

earth".<sup>16</sup> Paul's opponents possibly agree with this conviction, but understand ἐν σοί to mean "incorporated in his descendants by circumcision" (Burton 1921: 159; cf. Betz 1979: 142). As a result, they ask the Gentiles to undertake circumcision in order to be ἐν σοί and to share the blessing given through Abraham. Paul, however, regards Abraham as a "man of faith" and therefore interprets ἐν σοί as "following Abraham's faith". Consequently, what Paul means by quoting Gen. 12:3 and 18:18 is that: ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοὶ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ θεός. That is to say, "God was accepting Gentiles on the basis of faith without works of law in general or circumcision in particular" (Burton 1921: 161).

In 3:9, Paul confirms what he has argued in vv. 6-8 by recalling οἱ ἐκ πίστεως and identifying them with πάντα τὰ ἔθνη in v. 8, because ὥστε "introduces a concluding statement that stresses result" (Longenecker 1990: 115; cf. Betz 1979: 143; Burton 1921: 162). Paul's conclusion is that those who intend to inherit the blessing given through Abraham have to do what Abraham did (cf. Burton 1921: 162). What characterised Abraham for Paul's opponents is circumcision (Gen. 17), but for Paul it is simply his "faith" (Gen. 15:6 in Gal. 3:6).

To sum up, Paul's opponents, Jewish Christian Judaizers, insist that Abraham is a national hero of obedience to what God commands, in both accepting circumcision (Gen. 17) and in offering his son, Isaac (Gen. 22). As a result, those Gentiles who intend to be "descendants of Abraham" in order to inherit the blessings given through him must do what Abraham did, that is, obey God's commandments, among which circumcision is the most important. Paul, however, re-interprets Abraham's story by quoting Gen. 15:6, 12:3 and 18:18. He puts all the emphasis on "faith", claiming that "God's promise always had the Gentiles in view from the beginning" (Dunn 1990e: 247) and that Abraham was a "man of faith". Consequently, those Gentiles who want to be "descendants of Abraham" have to follow Abraham in order to be "men of faith", οἱ ἐκ πίστεως. This not only has nothing to do with Mosaic law, but is actually in contrast with ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, because the

law comes much later than the promise made to Abraham (Gal. 3:15-18). In short, Paul asserts that *the law is not necessary for Gentiles to become members of God's people*. What is essential is "faith" alone.

### Galatians 3:15-18

In Gal. 3:15-18, Paul sets up a contrast between the promise made to Abraham and Mosaic law and claims that the law came much later than the promise. As a result, the law cannot annul or add to what God promised Abraham. This means that God has promised the Gentiles that they may become members of God's people by means of faith; nobody can require them to observe Mosaic law in order to become proselytes and members of God's people.

According to Jewish tradition, Abraham is viewed as "having kept the entire Mosaic law even though the law was not given until much later" (Longenecker 1990: 133; cf. Betz 1979: 158; Str-B 3: 204-206).<sup>17</sup> Consequently, Abraham is also recognized as a hero of perfect obedience to the law (cf. Jeremias *TDNT* 1:8). Paul's opponents very likely employ this tradition and try to persuade the Galatians to follow Abraham in observing the law, even although the Galatians already have faith. Paul, of course, denies the existence of the Torah at the time of Abraham by pointing out that the Torah was revealed 430 years later.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, Abraham's faith was based on God's promise only (cf. Betz 1979: 139, 159).

In 3:15, Paul is speaking κατὰ ἄνθρωπον. According to Graeco-Roman rhetoric, this type of argument was classified under the general rubric of *exempla* ("example(s)"; cf. Betz 1979: 154).<sup>19</sup> In this "example", Paul is talking about a διαθήκη. Διαθήκη means "last will and testament", "agreement", or "treaty" (Behm *TDNT* 2: 124f.). Although διαθήκη is the most frequent translation in the LXX for *b'rit* in the Old Testament (270 of the 286 occurrences; cf. Longenecker 1990: 128) and although Paul uses διαθήκη again in v. 17 which clearly refers to the divine "covenant", the διαθήκη in v. 15 probably refers to human "will" or

"testament", because Paul is talking about an example taken from human life (cf. Behm *TDNT* 2: 129; Bruce 1982: 169).

Paul says in 3:15: ὅμως ἀνθρώπου κεκυρωμένην διαθήκην οὐδεὶς ἄθετεῖ ἢ ἐπιδιатάσσεται.<sup>20</sup> The main point at issue in this statement is that the διαθήκη is irrevocable after ratification (cf. Burton 1921: 179; Betz 1979: 156; Bruce 1982: 171; Fung 1988: 154f.; Longenecker 1990: 130; Behm *TDNT* 2: 129).<sup>21</sup> It is this irrevocability that is used by Paul to emphasize (τοῦτο δὲ λέγω) that διαθήκην προκεκυρωμένην ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ μετὰ τετρακόσια καὶ τριάκοντα ἔτη γεγωνὼς νόμος οὐκ ἄκυροί εἰς τὸ καταργῆσαι τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν in 3:17.

Paul's use of διαθήκη in 3:17 is unusual. Διαθήκη occurs in Paul eight times (Rom. 9:4; 11:27; 1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6; 3:14; Gal. 4:24; 3:15 and here). Only in Gal. 3:17 is διαθήκη used to refer to Abraham's covenant.<sup>22</sup> In Genesis, Abraham's covenant appears in chs. 15 and 17. In Gen. 15, the content of the covenant is God's promise to redeem Abraham's offspring from Egypt and to give them the promised land (15:12-16).<sup>23</sup> In Gen. 17, the covenant is connected with circumcision (17:10-11: "This is my *covenant* which you shall keep ... Every male among you shall be *circumcised* ... and it shall be a *sign of the covenant* between me and you").<sup>24</sup> Thereupon God promises Abraham to bless his wife by giving her a son and many descendants.<sup>25</sup>

In both Gen. 15 and 17, the covenant functions as confirmation of God's promises and blessings (cf. B.W. Anderson 1988: 363). This function of confirmation is probably what Paul has in mind when he uses διαθήκη in Gal. 3:17 (cf. Bruce 1982: 169). In Paul's mind, the main purpose of the covenant is to guarantee the promise. Paul's main concern in Gal. 3:15-18 is, therefore, the promise rather than the covenant *as such*. Paul still mentions διαθήκη in 3:17, possibly because he has used διαθήκη in 3:15 as an "example" in order to support his argument. Therefore he uses διαθήκη again in 3:17 to echo 3:15.

The promises God gives to Abraham include (1) descendants (Gen. 13:16; 15:5;

22:17), a great nation (Gen. 12:2; 17:5, 16; 22:17), (2) land (Gen. 12:7; 13:14-17; 15:18-21) and (3) the blessing of the nations.<sup>26</sup> Among these promises, the reference to the land is obviously not what concerns Paul in Galatians (cf. Bruce 1982: 172). To be a great nation is also unlikely to be Paul's interest. What is probably important for Paul is the promises of descendants and the blessing of the nations. He seems to conflate these promises and re-interpret them. Paul interprets Abraham as a "man of faith" (Gal. 3:6) and identifies the "descendants of Abraham" as οἱ ἐκ πίστεως (Gal. 3:7) which includes τὰ ἔθνη (Gal. 3:8). The promise made to Abraham is, therefore, to be the father of nations in terms of faith, i.e., ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη and ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοὶ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ θεὸς (Gal. 3:8).

Then, in Gal. 3:16, Paul connects Abraham with Christ. He says that the promise is made τῷ Ἀβραάμ and τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ. Burton interprets both τῷ Ἀβραάμ and τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ as dative (cf. 1921: 180f.). He is perhaps right as regards the language, but not in its present context. It is more likely that here both phrases function also as the dative of agent (cf. Moule 1963: 47), even instrumental, rather than only as dative of advantage, for the promise is made *to* Abraham and *through* him the blessing reaches his heirs. By being the recipient of the promise, Abraham is, or becomes, instrumental in its wider transmission. He mediates it to others. This meaning is surely present, even if such usage is uncommon. On this reading, v. 16a may be understood thus: "now the promises were made *through* Abraham and *through* his offspring". In 3:16b, Paul identifies τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ as Christ.<sup>27</sup> Both Abraham and Christ, therefore, become mediators of God's promise given to the Gentiles. Since Christ is the mediator of God's blessing, "faith in Christ" becomes the means by which the blessing is received.

Paul's argument is no doubt directed against his opponents who claim that since one can be a "descendant of Abraham" by keeping the law, observing the law is the only way to inherit the promises and blessings given through Abraham. Paul,



therefore, has to claim that what *was* made accessible to the Gentiles *through* Abraham in the past, *is* now made accessible to them *through* Christ and that "faith in Christ" is the only way to inherit the promises and blessings.

Finally, Paul concludes his arguments in Gal. 3:15-18 by setting the promise and the law against each other and by maintaining that κληρονομία is given to Abraham by virtue of the promise, rather than the law. Κληρονομία here could refer to the possession of God's work of salvation (cf. Betz 1979: 159; BAGD: 435 3).<sup>28</sup> Paul's opponents possibly claim that κληρονομία is obtained ἐκ νόμου which means that "the sons of Abraham are his physical descendants who keep the Law and the men of other nations who are incorporated into sonship by accepting the Law" (Foerster TDNT 3: 784; cf. Betz 1979: 159). Paul, however, insists that the κληρονομία given to Abraham is given ἐξ ἐπαγγελίας, not ἐκ νόμου, because οἱ ἐκ πίστεως are also υἱοὶ Ἀβραάμ (Gal. 3:7; cf. Foerster TDNT 3: 784).

To sum up, Paul's main point in Gal. 3:15-18 is that the Mosaic law, which comes much later than the promise given to Abraham, cannot annul or add to what God has promised Abraham. Therefore faith, not observance of the law, is the only means by which Gentiles can inherit the promise and the blessing. Paul's opponents, who hold the view of "membership legalism", perhaps employ Abraham's acceptance of circumcision to argue that the observance of the law is essential to salvation. Paul, however, disagrees with his opponents and insists that the Mosaic law, which came later, cannot annul God's promise to Abraham, which was given earlier. Then, Paul connects Abraham with Christ and identifies Christ as the only and true σπέρμα who inherits Abraham's role in the transmission of God's blessing. What Paul wants to emphasize in Gal. 3:15-18 is, therefore, that the law cannot replace faith in Christ. In other words, Paul insists that *the observance of the law is not necessary for Gentiles to become God's people.*

## Romans 4:9-15

Paul, in Rom. 4, is using the "diatribe" style of argument which is often employed by both the rabbinic and the Graeco-Roman philosophical schools (*cf.* Käsemann 1980: 114; Stowers 1981: 76).<sup>29</sup> Throughout Rom. 4, Paul takes Abraham as an "example" to show that there is a similarity between Abraham and Gentile believers: Abraham is reckoned as righteous by faith and not by circumcision and so are Gentile believers (*cf.* Stowers 1981: 173; Ziesler 1989: 120f.).<sup>30</sup>

As in Gal. 3, so in Rom. 4, Paul takes Abraham as his example in order to argue against his opponents. Abraham is understood within Judaism as "the archetype of the devout Jew who demonstrated his faithfulness to the covenant by keeping the law and who was reckoned righteous" (Dunn 1988: 196; *cf.* Black 1989: 65; Watson 1986: 138). Paul's opponents claim that because Abraham was reckoned as righteous by keeping the law, the promise given to Abraham can only be shared by Abraham's physical descendants according to the law, that is, Jews, to whom he also adds proselytes. Paul, however, re-interprets the Abraham story and claims that:

"he (sc. Abraham) trusted God and so was reckoned righteous before he had demonstrated his obedience through accepting circumcision (Gen. 17:10) or his faithfulness in being tested (Gen. 22) ... Because Abraham was reckoned righteous before such acts (Gen. 15:6), his righteousness is based on faith rather than works of obedience" (Achte-meier 1985: 78; *cf.* Black 1989: 65).

Consequently, unless one trusts like Abraham, one cannot become a descendant of Abraham and share the promise given through Abraham (*cf.* Achte-meier 1985: 79). In other words, to be a descendant of Abraham and to share the promise given through Abraham is no longer the privilege of Jews and proselytes only (*cf.* Käsemann 1971d: 89). Faith, rather than the law, is the only condition for becoming Abraham's descendant.

The main theme of Rom. 4 is, therefore, "the inclusion of the Gentiles" (Räsänen 1987: 172), *i.e.*, God intends to justify "Jew and Gentile on the same

ground, faith, and his action is in no way dependent on obedience to the law, nor is the promise restricted to those who are 'of the law'" (Sanders 1983: 34; cf. Dunn 1988: 196). For Paul, the idea that Gentiles can be justified by faith apart from the law is the centre of salvation history (cf. Käsemann 1971b: 73f.). This conviction stems from Jesus' death (cf. Käsemann 1971c: 46).<sup>31</sup>

In Rom. 4:9-10, Paul says:

Ὁ μακαρισμὸς οὖν οὗτος ἐπὶ τὴν περιτομὴν ἢ καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκροβυστίαν; λέγομεν γάρ, ἐλογίσθη τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἡ πίστις εἰς δικαιοσύνην. πῶς οὖν ἐλογίσθη; ἐν περιτομῇ ὄντι ἢ ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ; οὐκ ἐν περιτομῇ ἀλλ' ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ.

In these verses, Paul is arguing his case by "skillfully answering and asking questions" (Stowers 1981: 174). The first question is this: is the blessing in Ps. 32:1-2 confined to the circumcised alone? Ὁ μακαρισμός probably refers back to 4:6-8 which is quoted from Ps. 32:1-2. Then, in Rom. 4:9b, he mentions Gen. 15:6. This shows that Paul is using a rabbinical method of argumentation. He is, that is, aiming "to support a quotation from the Pentateuch by one from the Psalms" (Black 1989: 68). For Jews, the blessings of Ps. 32:1-2 are thought to be given only to them, the circumcised.<sup>32</sup> Paul, of course, rejects this assumption and appeals to Gen. 15:6 in support of his contention (cf. Cranfield 1975: 235). Black expresses Paul's argument as follows:

"the divine pronouncement of blessing which Abraham and his seed received was not just confined to the Jewish race (the 'circumcised'), but was upon all, Gentile and Jew alike, *whether circumcised or not*, who professed a faith like Abraham's" (1989: 69, his italics; cf. Räisänen 1987: 172; Dunn 1988: 208).

The second question Paul debates with his opponents is the relationship between Abraham's being reckoned as righteous (Gen. 15:6) and his accepting circumcision (Gen. 17). Paul's opponents, no doubt, connect Gen. 15 with Gen. 17 and claim that Abraham's acceptance of circumcision after being reckoned as righteous indicates that circumcision is a rite which is necessary to confirm the righteousness of faith. This argument seems to be really difficult for Paul to respond to convincingly, if he is to break the connection between Gen. 15 and Gen. 17. Consequently, Paul can

only argue, as he does in Gal. 3:17, by putting his emphasis on "Scriptural chronology" (Käsemann 1980: 114), *i.e.*, Gen. 15 is prior to Gen. 17 by 29 years<sup>33</sup> and so circumcision in Gen. 17 cannot be the necessary condition for the righteousness of faith in Gen. 15. This is perhaps what Paul means by saying that Abraham was reckoned as righteous οὐκ ἐν περιτομῇ ἀλλ' ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ. Paul's main point is:

"if Abraham could be accepted without having been circumcised, so can Gentiles now. There is thus no case for requiring the circumcision of Gentiles before they can be regarded as full Christians" (Ziesler 1989: 128; cf. Käsemann 1980: 116).

In short, circumcision cannot be the "indispensable presupposition of justification" (Käsemann 1980: 114). For this reason, Abraham is made to be πατέρα πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων δι' ἀκροβυστίας (4:11b).

In Rom. 4:11-12, Paul has to face an unavoidable, even unanswerable, question: if Abraham was reckoned as righteous when he was still uncircumcised, why did he then undertake circumcision? Paul seems to be unable to ignore the significance of Abraham's circumcision and therefore interprets it as σημεῖον περιτομῆς σφραγίδα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐν τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ in 4:11a. Käsemann claims that for Paul "Abraham's circumcision is the documentation and validation of the righteousness of faith" (1980: 115). It is, however, more likely that, in Paul's mind, Abraham's circumcision functions as the "outward and visible authentication, ratification and guarantee" (Cranfield 1975: 236) of the righteousness he already had by faith while still uncircumcised. Thus circumcision did not affect or effect the validity of the righteousness which Abraham had before circumcision. It could only confirm what had already been effected. If Abraham had not gone on to undertake circumcision, he would still have been righteous. The purpose of his circumcision was to be the ancestor of Jewish Christians who are both circumcised and have faith: πατέρα περιτομῆς τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς στοιχοῦσιν τοῖς ἰχνεσιν τῆς ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ πίστεως τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ (4:12).

Further on, in 4:13-14, Paul sets up an antithesis between the "promise" and the "law". In Jewish tradition, "promise" and the "law" are often connected (cf. Dunn 1988: 212; e.g., 2 Macc. 2:17-18: "It is God who has saved all his people ... as he *promised* through the *law*"). Paul, however, disagrees with this connection and claims:

Οὐ γὰρ διὰ νόμου ἡ ἐπαγγελία τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἢ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ, τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου, ἀλλὰ διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως. εἰ γὰρ οἱ ἐκ νόμου κληρονόμοι, κεκένωται ἡ πίστις καὶ κατήργηται ἡ ἐπαγγελία.

Here, the promise is interpreted to mean τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου. In Genesis, it is said that Abraham and his descendants will inherit the land of Canaan. In Judaism, this concept has been broadened to embrace the whole world: to inherit the whole world rather than Canaan only (cf. Cranfield 1975: 239; Dunn 1988: 213).<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, "to inherit the world" in Judaism also has an eschatological orientation: to inherit the future world (cf. Käsemann 1980: 118-120).<sup>35</sup> For Paul, however, "to inherit the world" more likely reflects his Gentile mission.<sup>36</sup> What Paul wants to say is, therefore, that the Gentile mission cannot be carried out through the law.

This statement is obviously directed against Paul's opponents' claim that the promise of Abraham is given to οἱ ἐκ νόμου only - Jews and proselytes. Paul refuses this assertion and maintains that to be a proselyte in order to inherit the promise is not necessary. In other words, the promise is given through faith rather than through the law. The reason is that if the promise is given through the law, the Gentiles will be excluded from the saving community. Sanders says:

"The promise *cannot* be inherited on the basis of keeping the law, because that would exclude Gentiles. But Gentiles cannot be excluded, for God has appointed Christ as Lord of the whole world and as saviour of all who believe, and has especially called and appointed Paul as apostle to the Gentiles" (1977: 489f., his italics).

To sum up, in Rom. 4:9-14 Paul again employs the tradition of Abraham and Gen. 15:6 and argues that Abraham is already reckoned as righteous before he undertakes circumcision. Therefore, faith rather than circumcision is the decisive

element, if Gentiles are to become God's people. Paul's opponents perhaps claim that the blessings of Ps. 32:1-2 and the promise given through Abraham are prepared for Abraham's physical descendants only - Jews, and, with them proselytes. Consequently, to accept circumcision is the necessary way for Gentiles to become members of the Jewish covenant community and then God's people. Paul's opponents possibly also employ the fact that Abraham goes on to undertake circumcision after he was reckoned as righteous to claim that circumcision is the necessary rite for Gentiles to supplement their faith. Paul, of course, rejects this assertion and insists that Abraham was already reckoned as righteous before he accepted circumcision. Therefore, circumcision functions only as the confirmation of faith; it cannot affect the validity of faith in the sense that it can only declare valid what is already so. As a result, the task of the Gentile mission is to invite Gentiles to have faith, but not to obey the law. If the Gentile mission depends on observance of the law, circumcision in particular, Gentiles will be excluded from the saved community. In short, *Torah observance is not necessary for Gentiles, if they are to become members of God's people. In other words, Gentiles have to be included in the community of God's people without observance of the law.*

## Galatians 5:2-5

In this passage, Paul goes much further and strongly prohibits the Galatians from being circumcised. Paul says:

Ἴδε ἐγὼ Παῦλος λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἐὰν περιτέμνησθε, Χριστὸς ὑμᾶς οὐδὲν ὠφελήσει. μαρτύρομαι δὲ πάλιν παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ περιτεμνομένῳ ὅτι ὀφειλέτης ἐστὶν ὅλον τὸν νόμον ποιῆσαι. κατηργήθητε ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ, οἵτινες ἐν νόμῳ δικαιοῦσθε, τῆς χάριτος ἐξεπέσατε. ἡμεῖς γὰρ πνεύματι ἐκ πίστεως ἐλπίδα δικαιοσύνης ἀπεκδεχόμεθα.

Gal. 5:1-12 is the first part of the "exhortation" section (5:1-6:10). It contains "a warning against taking up the yoke of the Jewish Torah and accepting the ritual of circumcision" (Betz 1979: 254; cf. Longenecker 1990: 221). Paul begins this



part by exerting his "personal apostolic influence" (Longenecker 1990: 225; cf. Betz 1979: 258: his "whole authority as an apostle"). This indicates that the situation in Galatia is serious, for Paul has to apply his apostolic authority and argue against his opponents strongly. The problem Paul faces here is that his opponents are trying to persuade the Galatians to undertake circumcision. The phrase, *ἐὰν περιτέμνησθε*, indicates that the Galatians have not yet been circumcised, but that they are now considering it. As a result, Paul is facing a crisis (cf. Burton 1921: 18, 273f.; Longenecker 1990: 226; Betz 1979: 47, 258; Gal. 1:6-7: *Θαυμάζω* ὅτι οὕτως ταχέως *μετατίθεσθε* ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς ἐν χάριτι [Χριστοῦ] εἰς ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον, ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο, εἰ μὴ τινὲς εἰσιν οἱ *ταράσσοντες* ὑμᾶς καὶ *θέλοντες μεταστρέψαι* τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ).

Paul tells the Galatians that if they accept circumcision, they are obliged to obey the whole law. It is very likely that Paul's opponents in Galatia are those Jewish Christian Judaizers who hold the convictions of "membership legalism" (see [2.1.2] on Rom. 2:25-29). As a result, Paul reminds the Galatians that circumcision is valuable "only if one goes all the way and keeps all of the Torah" (Betz 1979: 259). This does not mean that Paul intends to encourage the Galatians to obey the whole law. Rather, Paul bases his challenge to his opponents on the fact that they have no interest in the law apart from circumcision.<sup>37</sup> In 6:13, Paul further rebukes his opponents: οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι αὐτοὶ νόμον φυλάσσουσιν ἀλλὰ θέλουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι. Here Paul criticises his opponents' intention of persuading the Galatians to accept circumcision as nonsense, on the grounds that those who allow themselves to be circumcised are obliged to obey the whole law, *i.e.*, circumcision is valid only when those who are circumcised keep the whole law as well.<sup>38</sup>

In 5:4, Paul gives a theological reason why he prohibits the Galatians from being circumcised. Paul's reason is that if the Galatians accept circumcision, τῆς χάριτος ἐξεπέσατε. Burton points out that "the article with χάριτος marks the word as referring specifically to that grace of God or of Christ which was the

distinctive element of the gospel" (1921: 276f.). Paul expresses what he has in mind by using χάρις in Rom. 3:24: δικαιοσύμενοι δωρεάν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. In other words, God has performed a decisive saving action in Jesus' death, an action which is equivalent to what he had done in the Exodus and Restoration (see [2.2.2] on Rom. 3:24f.). When Paul's opponents persuade the Galatians to accept circumcision, they very likely claim that circumcision is "in some way *necessary* for salvation" (Betz 1979: 259, his italics). Consequently, if the Galatians accept this claim, it means that they regard God's saving action in Jesus as insufficient and consider the Torah to be necessary for their salvation (cf. Betz 1979: 261).

In 5:5, Paul points out a further reason why accepting circumcision is equivalent to falling away from grace. The reason is that both Paul and the Galatians are waiting for ἐλπίς δικαιοσύνης which can be obtained only "by a Spirit which is received by faith" (Burton 1921: 278). In Paul's mind, ἐλπίς is an eschatological term (cf. Bultmann *TDNT* 2: 531f.; *idem* 1952: 319f.; Conzelmann 1969: 184-186).<sup>39</sup> Ἐλπίς δικαιοσύνης, therefore, reflects the "eschatological nature of the gift of salvation" (Betz 1979: 262). This is why Paul uses the future tense, ὠφελήσει, in 5:2. Longenecker explains the phrase, ὑμᾶς οὐδὲν ὠφελήσει, as meaning that "Christ will not come to your aid or help you on the day of judgment" (1990: 226). In 5:5, Paul seems to say that the salvation they are waiting for is an eschatological deliverance which has nothing to do with the law; it can be received only by the Spirit and by faith. Therefore, the claim that circumcision is necessary for salvation is nonsense.

Although Paul has given a theological explanation, there is still a question left unanswered: why does Paul prohibit the Galatians from accepting circumcision? Paul encourages the Gentiles to obey food laws for the sake of the unity of the community (Rom. 14:20f.: ἀλλὰ κακὸν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ τῷ διὰ προσκόμματος ἐσθίοντι. καλὸν τὸ μὴ φαγεῖν κρέα μηδὲ πιεῖν οἶνον). **Why, then, does he** prohibit another ritual law, circumcision, in Galatia? Paul strongly prohibits Jews

from imposing the yoke of the law on Gentiles, but in Gal. 5:2-5 the Galatians seem to want to accept circumcision voluntarily. Why does Paul still prohibit circumcision in this case? It is generally accepted that the law and faith in Christ are mutually exclusive in Paul's mind (e.g., Burton 1921: 277). But why? The fundamental reason is perhaps explicable in terms of church politics.

The phrases, οἵτινες ἐν νόμῳ δικαιοῦσθε in Gal. 5:4, ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου in 3:10 and οἱ ἐκ πίστεως in 3:7, probably refer to two groups of Christians. These two groups possibly derive from οἱ Ἑβραῖοι and οἱ Ἑλληνισταί in Acts 6:1. οἱ Ἑβραῖοι are a Jewish Christian group with "observance of the law", circumcision in particular, as their slogan. They are, therefore, called ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. Paul's opponents very likely belong to this group. Peter is perhaps the leader, or at least one of the leaders. On the other hand, οἱ Ἑλληνισταί develop a Gentile mission and sometimes identify themselves with Gentile Christians. Therefore, οἱ Ἑλληνισταί and their converts become a Gentile Christian group with "faith in Christ" as their slogan. For this reason, they are called οἱ ἐκ πίστεως. Paul is obviously the leader, or at least one of the leaders, of this group. These two groups seem to have been engaged in a serious power struggle in the early days of the church (see [4.1.1] on Gal. 2:11-14). By emphasizing their slogans the two groups were driven into clearer opposition with one another: οἱ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου highlighted the distinctive importance of circumcision, while οἱ ἐκ πίστεως laid weight on the doctrine of justification by faith alone.

Circumcision, therefore, is not only "the external ritual symbolizing the acceptance of Judaism" (Betz 1979: 258), but also the most distinctive symbol which distinguished Paul's group from his opponents. The Galatians were originally Paul's converts who naturally belonged to οἱ ἐκ πίστεως. If they accepted circumcision and the slogan, οἱ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, that did not simply mean that they were going "to switch from Pauline theology to their Jewish-Christian theology" (Betz 1979: 261), but actually meant that they were going to make a break away from

Paul's group, οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, in order to join his opponents' group, οἱ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. This was, of course, intolerable for Paul. Paul had to prohibit his converts from accepting circumcision in order to win back their loyalty and keep them in his group.<sup>40</sup>

## Summing Up

Paul's missionary tactics for the Gentiles is clear: *faith alone is essential, Jewish law is not necessary and circumcision in particular is prohibited.* Paul's opponents are those Jewish Christian Judaizers who hold the conviction of "membership legalism" which emphasizes that circumcision is essential for those Gentiles who intend to join the covenantal community and so inherit the blessings promised to Abraham. Paul's opponents probably employ the Abraham story to highlight his acceptance of circumcision after having been reckoned as righteous. They do so in order to demonstrate that circumcision is still necessary for someone who already has faith, for circumcision perfects faith.

Paul also employs the Abraham story, but interprets it differently. Paul lays his emphasis on Gen. 15:6 and claims that Abraham is a pure "man of faith", someone who has already been reckoned as righteous long before his acceptance of circumcision. Abraham's circumcision functions only to confirm his faith and to recognize the validity it already has. As a result, Abraham's true descendants are οἱ ἐκ πίστεως rather than οἱ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. Paul furthermore employs the promises God gives to Abraham: the promise of descendants and of being a blessing to the nations. Paul seems to conflate these promises and re-interpret them so as to make Abraham the father of nations in terms of faith, which is now given to οἱ ἐκ πίστεως through Jesus. Paul especially rejects the possibility of Gentiles undertaking circumcision, even voluntarily, for to accept circumcision is to render insufficient God's saving grace in Jesus' death and resurrection. In the background is also the notion that to undertake circumcision is to transfer one's allegiance from

Paul's group to that of his opponents. Accordingly, Paul strongly prohibits this.

In short, Paul claims that faith alone is essential for Gentiles to become members of God's people. The law is not necessary and circumcision, in particular, is prohibited.

### 3.1.2 The meaning of "faith"

Sanders maintains that Paul does not clearly define what faith is in his epistles (cf. 1977: 493). Paul's main purpose in using "faith" is to argue against his opponents' assertion that observance of the law is necessary for salvation.<sup>41</sup> Sanders' argument is probably right. Paul indeed uses "faith" very frequently without any clear explanation. This is perhaps because the meaning of "faith" is known by Paul and his converts and therefore is taken for granted. Consequently, Paul does not have to explain it every time. However, Paul does reveal what he has in mind when he talks about "faith" in certain of his epistles, Rom. 4:17-25 in particular. As a result, to gather some ideas about what faith is for Paul is still possible.

When Paul talks about "faith", he often uses πιστεύειν εἰς (e.g., Gal. 2:16) or πιστεύειν ὅτι (e.g., Rom. 10:9). This indicates that the object and content of "faith" are the most important elements in what Paul says about it (cf. Conzelmann 1969: 171). In Gal. 2:16, the object of "faith" is Jesus Christ (εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύομεν). In Rom. 10:9, the content of "faith" is recognizing Jesus as Lord by his death and resurrection (κύριον Ἰησοῦν ... ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, cf. Bultmann 1952: 317; *idem* TDNT 6: 209; Bornkamm 1971: 145). "Faith" is, therefore, man's response to the object and the content of faith. Bultmann indicates that the response of faith includes "obedience", "hope", "confession", "fear" and "confidence" (Bultmann 1952: 314-323).

The act of "faith" begins with ἀκοή (cf. Fitzmyer 1990a: 1407; Rom. 10:17: ἄρα ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς, ἡ δὲ ἀκοή διὰ ῥήματος Χριστοῦ). On one occasion Paul sets ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως in contrast to ἐξ ἔργων νόμου (Gal 3:2, 5). This indicates that the content of ἀκοή is the gospel. This is very different from the Jewish view of justification ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. Hearing the gospel results in the *knowledge* that God's deliverance now comes from the death and the resurrection of Jesus, rather than from the law. Bultmann indicates that this knowledge includes both the knowledge of God's saving act in Christ mediated through the kerygma and a new self-understanding in the light of God's act of salvation (cf. TDNT 6: 218). This knowledge, then, becomes the basis of faith (cf. Bultmann 1952: 318; Rom. 6:8f.: πιστεύομεν ὅτι ... εἰδότες ὅτι Χριστὸς ἐγερθεὶς ἐκ νεκρῶν οὐκέτι ἀποθνήσκει). Conzelmann, therefore, claims that faith has "an understandable dogmatic content" (1969: 172; cf. Bultmann 1952: 318).

Hearing the gospel and the knowledge which leads to an *assent* (cf. Fitzmyer 1990a: 1407; Kümmel 1973: 200), or *acceptance* (cf. Bornkamm 1971: 141; Barrett 1991: 29; Ziesler 1989: 69; Black 1989: 31) of what is heard (cf. Kümmel 1973: 201). Acceptance of what is heard is a *decision* (cf. Conzelmann 1969: 171; Käsemann 1980: 23), that is, a right choice between διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ and ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. Bultmann maintains that acceptance of the kerygma means "subjection to the way of salvation ordained by God and opened up in Christ" (TDNT 6: 217; cf. Ziesler 1989: 69: "the acceptance of the divine overtures") and that the free act of decision is "the obedient submission to the God-determined way of salvation" which is the cross of Christ (Bultmann 1952: 316).

Faith culminates in ὑπακοή πίστεως (Rom. 1:5; cf. Fitzmyer 1990a: 1407). Barrett renders ὑπακοή πίστεως by "believing obedience" (1991: 29). Bultmann connects Rom. 1:8 (ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν καταγγέλλεται ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ) with 16:19 (ἡ γὰρ ὑμῶν ὑπακοή εἰς πάντας ἀφίκετο) and suggests that obedience is the primary meaning of "faith" in Paul (cf. 1952: 314). Obedience to the gospel sometimes takes the form of "trust" (cf. Conzelmann 1969: 173), "confession" (cf.



Bultmann 1952: 317; Rom. 10:9) or "commitment" (cf. Barrett 191: 29). Bultmann interprets "trust in God" as "complete surrender of one's own care and strength to God" (1952: 323). Conzelmann claims that obedience is simply believing God and refusing to count one's achievement before God (cf. 1969: 172; Kümmel 1973: 202).

In short, "faith" in Paul means to *hear*, to *understand*, to *accept*, to *confess*, to *submit* and to *trust* in the gospel of the death, resurrection and lordship of Jesus. It also implies a *decision* and *commitment* to God's way of attaining righteousness which is by faith, rather than the Jewish way which is by the works of the law. This idea is confirmed by what Paul says in Rom. 4:5, 17-25.

### Romans 4:5, 17-25

In the present passage, Paul explains what "faith" is by means of his interpretation of Abraham's faith.<sup>42</sup> In 4:17b-22 Paul says:

κατέναντι οὐ ἐπίστευσεν θεοῦ τοῦ ζῳοποιούντος τοὺς νεκροὺς  
καὶ καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα ... καὶ πληροφορηθεῖς ὅτι ὁ  
ἐπηγγέλται δυνατός ἐστιν καὶ ποιῆσαι. διὸ [καί] ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ  
εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

Abraham's faith, according to Paul, means that he fully trusts God, the creator, who creates life where there is no life and who does what people regard as impossible. For example, he gives a son to Abraham and raises Jesus from death (cf. Black 1989: 72; Barrett 1991: 91; Ziesler 1989: 132; Sanders 1977: 490; Bultmann 1952: 314f.; Whiteley 1964: 162). This is what Paul means by saying ὅς παρ' ἐλπίδα ἐπ' ἐλπίδι in v. 18. The two "hopes" are possibly different: "it is when *human hope* is exhausted that *God-given hope* ... comes into effect" (Barrett 1991: 91, my italics; cf. Ziesler 1989: 133).

Paul's real purpose in talking about Abraham's faith is to apply this faith to the "present-day faith of the Christian" (Black 1989: 73), because Christians now share the same God, the same promise and the same faith as Abraham (cf. Barrett 1991: 93; Ziesler 1989: 133). Paul, therefore, says:

Οὐκ ἐγράφη δὲ δι' αὐτὸν μόνον ὅτι ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' ἡμᾶς οἷς μέλλει λογίζεσθαι, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν, ὃς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν (Rom. 4:23-25).

In this passage, Paul clearly indicates that the content of "faith" is the recognition of Jesus as Lord on account of his death and resurrection. The connections he makes between Jesus' death and our trespasses and between resurrection and justification has been described as the "rhetoric of antithetical parallelism" (Käsemann 1980: 129).<sup>43</sup> What Paul means is probably that, because of Jesus' death and resurrection, our transgressions have been taken away and our righteousness has been given freely. This same idea is also found in Rom. 10:9:

ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃς ἐν τῷ στόματί σου κύριον Ἰησοῦν καὶ πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ.

"Jesus is Lord" is very likely an established "primitive Christian declaration of belief" which was repeated in worship and in baptism in particular (Ziesler 1989: 262; cf. Käsemann 1980: 291; Black 1989: 145f.; Cranfield 1979: 527; Acts 2:36: καὶ κύριον αὐτὸν καὶ χριστὸν ἐποίησεν ὁ θεός, 2 Cor. 4:5: οὐ γὰρ ἑαυτοὺς κηρύσσομεν ἀλλὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν κύριον, Phil. 2:11: καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός). As lords have servants, so Jesus, the Lord, is to be served by Christians (cf. Ziesler 1989: 262). As a result, to confess, "Jesus is Lord" is to acknowledge oneself as belonging to Jesus, to submit oneself to his guidance and to accept his protection (cf. Cranfield 1979: 529; Ziesler 1989: 262; Dunn 1988: 607f.).

Moreover, in the Old Testament "Lord" is used of Yahweh. In the New Testament, apart from the Pauline epistles, "Lord" is also often used of God (e.g., Lk. 1:46f.: Καὶ εἶπεν Μαριάμ, Μεγαλύνει ἡ ψυχὴ μου τὸν κύριον, καὶ ἠγαλλίασεν τὸ πνεῦμα μου ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ σωτῆρί μου). Some scholars, therefore, suggest that for Paul "the confession that Jesus is Lord meant the acknowledgment that Jesus shares the name and the nature, the holiness, the authority, power, majesty and eternity of the one and only true God" (Cranfield

1979: 529; cf. Ziesler 1989: 262; Dunn 1988: 608). This suggestion is possibly rather extravagant.

Paul founds his confession of Jesus as Lord on the belief that God raised him from the dead. This means that for Paul "the belief that God raised Jesus from the dead is the decisive and distinctive belief of Christians" (Cranfield 1979: 530; cf. Black 1989: 145; 1 Cor. 15:14: εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, κενὸν ἄρα [καὶ] τὸ κήρυγμα ἡμῶν, κενὴ καὶ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν).

What Paul has in mind in Rom. 4:24f. is, therefore, that through God's decisive action in Jesus' death and resurrection, the risen Jesus has become the Lord. He delivers us from God's wrath at man's sin and acquits us in order that we may be acceptable before God, both in the present and in the future. "Faith", therefore, means recognizing Jesus as Lord, that is, recognizing God's saving plan in Jesus' death and resurrection, and accepting and obeying Jesus' lordship. This lordship implies submitting oneself to his guidance and protection and choosing him as the only way to salvation.

A question has arisen from the comparison between Paul's interpretation of Abraham's faith in Rom. 4:17-21 and his teaching in faith in Rom. 4:24f. In 4:17-21, Abraham's faith is interpreted as trusting God who can do what people regard as impossible. In 4:24f., what Paul mentions is Jesus' death and resurrection. The fact of Jesus' death and resurrection is probably difficult for non-Christians to believe. Paul's audience, however, is Christian: it composed of his opponents, Jewish Christians, and the congregation of the Roman church, which mainly consisted of Gentile Christians, together with a minority of Jewish Christians. For Christians, belief in Jesus' death and resurrection is not only possible, but the prerequisite of faith. Therefore, when Paul emphasizes that faith is believing what is impossible, to what does Paul refer? What is the relationship between this impossible thing and Jesus' death and resurrection?

That which Paul's opponents regard as impossible but which Paul believes to be possible is very likely the Gentile mission without circumcision. Between Rom.

4:17-21 and 4:24f., Paul recalls Gen. 15:6 (Rom. 4:22). Gen. 15:6 is often used by Paul to justify his Gentile mission: God has promised that Gentiles can become full members of God's people without observance of the law. It is perhaps the case that Paul's opponents have been claiming that without observance of the law, circumcision in particular, it is impossible to become a member of the covenant people. They have been insisting that both faith in Christ and observance of the law are necessary for becoming a member of God's people. Paul, however, maintains that even without circumcision this is possible, because God has promised that Gentiles can become his people without the law and because God has acted decisively to save in Jesus' death and resurrection. As a result, to accept Jesus' lordship is enough for becoming God's people. The law is, therefore, not necessary for Gentiles.

This interpretation can be confirmed by Rom. 4:5: πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἄσεβῃ λογίζεται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ εἰς δικαιοσύνην. Here "faith" is defined as trusting God who justifies the "ungodly". In Paul, ἄσεβής is synonymous with ἁμαρτωλός (cf. Dunn 1988: 204; Rom. 5:6: ἔτι γὰρ Χριστὸς ὄντων ἡμῶν ἀσθενῶν ἔτι κατὰ καιρὸν ὑπὲρ ἄσεβῶν ἀπέθανεν, Rom. 5:8: ὅτι ἔτι ἁμαρτωλῶν ὄντων ὑμῶν Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανεν). ἁμαρτωλός often refers to a Gentile, because he is, by definition, outside the covenant (see [2.2.1] on Gal. 2:15f.).<sup>44</sup> What Paul says in Rom. 4:5 is, therefore, that "faith" is trusting that God will justify the Gentiles as he justified Abraham.<sup>45</sup> Abraham is a model of the "man of faith". Accordingly, the full meaning of 4:5 is that "faith" is believing and accepting the fact that God will justify Gentiles by means of faith rather than by the law, just as God justified Abraham on account of his faith and not his circumcision. Paul believes that justifying Gentiles is one of God's promises (Gal. 3:8: ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοῖ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ θεός); he regards trusting God to justify the "ungodly" as trusting God to do what he has promised in Rom. 4:21.

In short, for Gentiles, "faith" means becoming a member of God's people without any reference to the law. Paul's opponents insist that observance of the

law, circumcision in particular, is the essential condition of becoming God's people. For them, therefore, the idea that Gentiles can join the covenantal community without circumcision is simply unbelievable. Paul, however, asserts that God has promised to justify Gentiles by faith alone, just as he justified Abraham when he was still uncircumcised. For this purpose God has performed a saving action in Jesus' death and resurrection. As a result, that Gentiles can become God's people without observance of the law is absolutely possible. "Faith", therefore, means learning, accepting, choosing, obeying and trusting what God has promised, namely that he will justify Gentiles apart from the law. It is, therefore, fair to conclude that, for Paul, "faith" simply means recognizing Jesus as Lord. It does not imply observing the law. For Paul's opponents, on the other hand, "faith" means both observing the law *and* recognizing Jesus as God's appointed Messiah.

## The Reasons

Why does Paul insist that the law is not necessary for Gentiles to become members of God's people? Logically, Gentiles are *non-Jews* who are, by definition, *not* under *Jewish* law. This is, however, modern logic. Jews in Paul's time, the group of Paul's opponents in particular, did not consider salvation in this way. They regarded God as the *Jewish* God (see [4.1.2] on Rom. 3:28) and themselves as the *Sinai* covenant people. Accordingly, the only community of God's people was the Jewish community and the only way to become a member of the Jewish God's people was through joining the Sinai covenant. By definition, joining the community of God's people was equivalent to joining the Jewish community. Those Gentiles who intended to become members of God's people, therefore, had to become proselytes, because only Jews by birth or proselytes could be members of the Jewish God's people.

Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a Pharisee. He very likely shared the beliefs of zealous Jews as described above. This was perhaps the reason why he persecuted the Hellenistic church (Gal. 1:13; Phil. 3:6) which did not require Gentiles to become proselytes in order to become members of God's people. After becoming a Christian, however, Paul insists that Jewish law is not necessary for Gentiles to become members of God's people. Why? Why does Paul change his mind?

The generally accepted answer to this question is that Paul's encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus *converts* him. As a result, he changes his way of thinking completely and regards the law as totally worthless.<sup>46</sup> Paul,



however, does not change his mind so completely. He not only regards the law as still valuable for Jews, but also encourages Jews to obey the whole law (see [2.1]). On one occasion, he even asks Gentiles to observe food laws (Rom. 14:21) in order to keep the peace in the community (see [4.1.1] on Rom. 14:1-15:13). Furthermore, Paul never talks about his "conversion". In Gal. 1:15f., Paul associates his experience on the road to Damascus with a *calling* rather than a conversion.<sup>47</sup>

Sanders, on the other hand, maintains that it is Paul's "exclusivist soteriology" that leads him to oppose the law. An "exclusivist soteriology" implies that "salvation is only in Christ and appropriated only by faith" (1977: 419). Because salvation comes only in Christ, it follows that any other possible way of salvation, including the law, is excluded (cf. 1977: 419, 443, 550; 1983: 17, 68, 152; 1991: 42, 98f.).<sup>48</sup> Faith in Christ, however, excludes nothing but those things which oppose faith, e.g., adultery and idolatry. Paul does not prohibit Jews from practising the law, including circumcision, food laws and the sabbath (see [2.1]). What Paul prohibits, is the imposing of the observance of the law on Gentiles (see [3.1] and [4.1]). It is, therefore, fair to suggest that the reason why Paul opposes the law is not because the law is excluded by faith, but rather because the law, circumcision, food laws and the sabbath in particular, is too difficult for Gentiles to practise.

Dunn suggests that the reason why Paul rejects the "works of the law" is that these laws function as the marks and boundary of Jewish self-identity which separate Jews from the "nations" (cf. 1990f: 194; 1990d: 216-218, 223f., 231; 1990e: 242f.). Dunn's suggestion, however, is not complete, because there is a fundamental reason for the separation. The separation, in other words, is a fact, but the fact needs to be explained. It is not enough for Dunn to note the separation. He must explain it. The law separates, but *why* does it separate? It separates Jew from Gentile, because the Gentile finds it too difficult to practise.

To answer the question, why Paul regards Jewish law as not necessary for Gentiles, is very difficult, because Paul does not give a clear explanation in his epistles. Consequently, we have to employ material outside the Pauline epistles and guess what lies behind the limited passages in his epistles which deals with this subject.<sup>49</sup> Among the factors which lead Paul to abandon the law, practical factors are probably prior to theological ones (*cf.* Räisänen 1987a: 416).<sup>50</sup> That is to say, Paul faces practical problems during his Gentile mission which makes him to decide to abandon requiring Gentiles to obey the law. Then, and only then, does he develop a theology which legitimates his tactics. In other words, only after Paul has faced certain practical problems, does he begin to develop a theological system in order to solve these problems. It is very likely that after his encounter with the risen Jesus, he begins his Gentile mission in a characteristically Jewish way - preaching the gospel *and* circumcision (Gal. 5:11: εἰ περιτομὴν ἔτι κηρύσσω, τί ἔτι διώκομαι;).<sup>51</sup> Observance of the law, however, seems to be very difficult for Gentiles.<sup>52</sup> Consequently, Paul has to choose law-free tactics in order to "make it easier for Gentiles to become Christians" and to "increase the success of Christian preaching" (Watson 1986: 34).

### 3.2.1 Practical Difficulties

Watson indicates that "the main features of the Jewish ritual law were objects of ridicule in the Graeco-Roman world" (1986: 34; *cf.* Stern 1976: 1150-1159). Circumcision, food laws and the sabbath were probably the most difficult laws for Gentiles to practise. For example, in *The Epistle to Diognetus* (4:1) we read:

"their (*sc.* Jews') scruples about *food* and superstition about the *Sabbath*, and their pride in *circumcision* and the sham of their *fasting* and *feast* of the new moon, are *ridiculous* and *unworthy* of any argument" (*cit.* Watson 1986: 35, *my italics*).

Also, in Juvenal (*Saturae* 14:96-106) we read:

"Some who have had a father who revere the *Sabbath*, worship nothing but the clouds, and the divinity of the heavens, and see no difference between eating *swine's flesh*, from which their father abstained, and that of man; and in time they take to *circumcision*. Having been wont to flout the laws of Rome, they learn and practice and revere the Jewish law, and all that Moses handed down in his secret tome, forbidding to point out the way to any not worshipping the same rites, and conducting none but the circumcised to the desired fountain. For all which the father was to blame, who gave up every seventh day to idleness, keeping it apart from all the concerns of life."

[*Quidam sortiti metuentem sabbata patrem  
nil praeter nubes et caeli numen adorant,  
nec distare putant humana carne suillam,  
qua pater abstinuit, mox et praeputia ponunt;  
Romanas autem soliti contemnere leges  
Iudaicum ediscunt et servant ac metuunt ius,  
tradidit arcano quodcumque volumine Moyses:  
non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti,  
quaesitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos.  
Sed pater in causa, cui septima quaeque fuit lux  
ignava et partem vitae non attigit ullam*]  
(*cit.* Stern 1980: 102f., para. 301).<sup>53</sup>

Circumcision is probably the rite which received the most ridicule. Philo *Spec. Leg.* 1:1f.: "I will begin with that which is an object of ridicule among many people. Now the practice which is thus ridiculed, namely the circumcision of the genital organs ..." Petronius tells us a story about a Gentile master who talks about his Jewish slave: "He has only two faults ... He is circumcised and he snores" [*Duo tamen vitia habet ... recutitus est et stertit*] (Petronius *Satyricon* 68:8, *cit.* Stern 1974: 442, para. 193).

The most likely reason why circumcision, food laws and the sabbath were so unattractive in the Graeco-Roman world is that these rites "created a social distinction between Jews and other races" (Sanders 1983: 102; *cf. idem* 1990: 23; Dunn 1990f: 191-193; *idem* 1990d: 217f.; *idem* 1990e: 243). Their separateness in worship and in their eating habits made Jews "hateful" to other peoples (3 Macc. 3:4). In this context, it is useful to recall Juvenal's lines above, where Judaism is described as "forbidding to point out the way to any not worshipping the same rites, and conducting none but the circumcised to the desired fountain" (Juvenal *Saturae* 14:103f.). Proselytes were regarded as those who had to "despise the gods,

to disown their country, and to regard their parents, children, and brothers as of little account" (Tacitus *Historiae* 5:5.2). It is, therefore, fair to imagine that if a Gentile became a proselyte and so was obliged to observe circumcision, food laws and the sabbath, he would have been isolated from his fellow Gentiles and become "hateful" among his people.

Of these three rites "circumcision was the most difficult hurdle for those who were attracted to Judaism and contemplated becoming proselytes" (Barclay 1988: 47). Kuhn indicates that only 8 out of 554 Jewish inscriptions found in Italy refer to proselytes (cf. *TDNT* 6:732f.). This surely indicates that proselytes were rather few in number, because circumcision is normally regarded as the fundamental requirement for proselytes.<sup>54</sup> Circumcision is the most important mark of Jewish national identity. Tacitus *Historiae* 5:5.2: "They (sc. Jews) adopted circumcision to distinguish themselves from other peoples by this difference." Those Gentiles who accepted circumcision were, therefore, regarded as unfaithful and unloyal to their gods, their country and their family.<sup>55</sup> We should note too Petronius *Satyricon* 102:14: "'Oh, yes', said Giton, 'and please circumcise us too, so that we look like Jews ...'" [*"Quidni?" inquit Giton "etiam circumcide nos, ut Iudaei videamur ..."*] (cit. Stern 1974: 443, para. 194). Furthermore, in Jos. *Ant.* 20:39, when the Gentile King Izates intended to accept circumcision, his mother prohibited him from doing so, because if he undertook circumcision his people would not be subject to his kingship: they would think "that he was so fond of rites that were to them strange and foreign; and ... they would never bear to be ruled over by a Jew."

Another possible reason which made circumcision so unattractive was that circumcision is a rite which cuts off the foreskin. This rite may have been regarded as sexually unattractive in the Graeco-Roman world. Philo describes the circumcised as those who "undergo the operation and suffer severe pains in *mutilating* the bodies of themselves and their nearest and dearest" (*Spec. Leg.* 1:3). This suggests that circumcision was regarded as mutilation. This is confirmed by the fact that Paul himself once compares circumcision to mutilation (Phil. 3:2:

κατατομή) and castration (Gal. 5:12: ἀποκόπτειν, cf. Watson 1986: 35; Barclay 1988: 46, fn. 25). Some Jews, therefore, hid their circumcision, or even removed the marks of circumcision in order to have fellowship with Gentiles.<sup>56</sup> If even Jews did this, we can imagine how unattractive circumcision must have been for the Gentiles. If a Gentile undertook circumcision, he would probably have had difficulty in getting back into Gentile society. Philo's *Spec. Leg.* 1:3 points to another problem of circumcision, namely, the "severe pains" associated with it. The operation of circumcision is painful and possibly dangerous. It is, therefore, not surprising that most Gentiles did not like circumcision.

The main difficulty in observing food laws was that to get kosher food was sometimes not easy, particularly in the Diaspora. Sanders notes that "at some times and in some places, Jews did not have suitable food and drink", especially when they were travelling (1990: 277). In the cities, if Jews went to the public market to buy food, they could easily choose kosher animals and make sure that there was no blood in it, but they may have had difficulty in buying meat and wine which had not been sacrificed to idols (cf. 1990: 273, 278). If there were Jewish shops in the city, there still were problems: kosher food was more expensive than non-kosher food.<sup>57</sup> Getting kosher food was not only a problem for Jews, but certainly also for those Gentiles who wanted to observe the food laws.

If a Jew could find kosher food and could afford it, he still had problems in having table fellowship with Gentiles. Sanders (1990: 282) suggests that there are three ways for Jews to eat with Gentiles if they are invited for a meal: (1) to eat Jewish food, (2) not to enquire whether the food is kosher or not and (3) to bring their own food and wine, or eat vegetables and drink water. We can imagine how unhappy a Gentile host would have been, if he had this kind of guest. We also can imagine that, if, in the house of a Gentile host, the guest was a Gentile *proselyte*, the situation would have been even worse: a host could perhaps understand *Jews* practising *Jewish* food laws, but why should these *Gentiles* do this silly *Jewish* thing? It is, therefore, fair to conclude that if a Gentile observed

Jewish food laws, he would have met with greater problems than a Jew and would have been isolated from his fellow Gentiles.

The observance of the sabbath is sometimes described as "loss" (*laedantur*).<sup>58</sup> This refers to the fact that Jews are not allowed to earn their livelihood on the sabbath. When Ptolemy came into Jerusalem with his army, Josephus comments that Jews "make no use of their arms" on the sabbath. This is regarded as a "mad custom", a "foolish practice" and an "idle" idea (Jos. *Ap.* 1:209-211). This practice seems to have been very difficult for Gentiles. A Gentile employer would possibly, although it may still have been problematic, allow his Jewish employee to observe the sabbath,<sup>59</sup> but it is unlikely that he would have given Gentile employees the same advantage. Consequently, observance of the sabbath was more difficult for Gentiles than for Jews.

In the Roman empire, Jews were allowed several advantages, *e.g.*, to be free from the court on the sabbath (Jos. *Ant.* 16:27), to be free from military service (Jos. *Ant.* 14:226f.),<sup>60</sup> or to get their food distribution reserved until next day if the distribution was held on the sabbath (Philo *Legat.* 158).<sup>61</sup> It is highly unlikely, however, that proselytes could claim the same advantages, because they were *not* Jews. It was, therefore, very difficult for Gentiles to observe the sabbath.

In short, Jewish law, especially circumcision, food laws and the sabbath, was very difficult for Gentiles to practise in a Gentile environment. If Paul wanted to increase the success of Christian preaching, he had to abandon the requirement of the observance of the law. This, however, is only half the story. Unless Paul believed that the law-free tactic was theologically a viable option, he would not have used it. It is possible that Paul at first hesitated to employ the law-free tactic, when he first found it difficult to convert Gentiles by the law-bound tactic. When, however, Gentile converts began to experience the Spirit in an uncircumcised state, he came to believe that his tactic was correct and therefore employed it.



### 3.2.2 Practical Experience (Gal. 3:1-5)

Paul rebukes the Galatians in Gal. 3:1-5 by asking the following questions:

... ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἁκοῆς πίστεως; οὕτως ἀνόητοί ἐστε, ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελείσθε; τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῇ; εἰ γε καὶ εἰκῇ. ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἁκοῆς πίστεως;

In this passage, Paul intends to recall the Galatians' *experience* of what has happened in their lives since they first accepted the gospel (*cf.* Longenecker 1990: 99). It is likely that Paul here is dealing with the crisis regarding circumcision. Paul recalls the Galatians' experience, because this experience is "an undeniable fact": their past experience and their present openness<sup>61</sup> to the possibility of circumcision are in complete contradiction (*cf.* Betz 1979: 132).

Paul's opponents very likely consider faith in Jesus' death and resurrection as insufficient for salvation. As a result, circumcision is necessary in order to make their salvation "perfect" (Gal. 3:3: νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελείσθε; *cf.* Beker 1980: 42). Paul, however, criticises as absurd the argument which regards "the gift of the divine Spirit as an imperfect beginning" and maintains that it is foolish "to expect the climax and perfection from something done to the human 'flesh'" (Betz 1979: 133). Paul emphasizes that "the Christian life is one that starts, is maintained, and comes to culmination only through dependence on the activity of God's Spirit" (Longenecker 1990: 104; *cf.* Dunn 1990e: 246). The experience of the Spirit is considered as the most important sign of belonging to the community of God's people (*cf.* Barclay 1988: 85). This belief enables Paul to maintain that the Galatians have experienced the Spirit and therefore are certainly God's people.<sup>62</sup> They do not need anything else to make salvation "perfect".

Paul asserts this by arguing that, from the beginning, the Galatians experienced the Spirit ἐξ ἁκοῆς πίστεως<sup>63</sup> and not ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. That means that circumcision is not necessary for Gentiles to become God's people, for faith in

Christ is fully sufficient for salvation. Accordingly, Betz claims that "the proclamation of the Christian faith alone is sufficient for God's grace and therefore sufficient for the Galatians' salvation" (1979: 136). Barclay also maintains that "by appealing to their experience of the Spirit, Paul clearly intends to assure the Galatians that, without becoming proselytes, they are nonetheless full<sup>y</sup>-approved members of the family of God" (1988: 85; cf. Acts 11:2-18).

In short, the fact that the Galatians have experienced the Spirit in their uncircumcised state demonstrates that circumcision is not necessary for salvation (cf. Räisänen 1987a: 413). To refrain from it, therefore, does not prevent one from becoming a member of God's people. This experience enables Paul to believe that his law-free tactic is appropriate. Consequently, when the law-bound tactic fails to bring Gentiles into the community of God's people, Paul abandons it.

Furthermore, Sanders connects the experience of the Spirit with Paul's eschatology. He claims that the possession of the Spirit is "the present guarantee of future salvation" (1977: 447). According to Sanders' concept of "eschatological soteriology" (cf. 1977: 447-463), Paul believes that:

"God has appointed Christ as Lord and saviour of the world. All who believe in him have the Spirit as the guarantee of future full salvation and are at present considered to participate in Christ's body, to be one Spirit with him. As such, they are to act in accordance with the Spirit, which is also to serve Christ as the Lord to whom they belong" (1977: 463; cf. 1991: 26-33).

Paul's eschatological thought very likely stemmed immediately from the "Hellenists". They understood Jesus' death to be expiatory, bringing about the forgiveness of sins. The significance of the temple was, therefore, reduced. In addition, they interpreted the resurrection of Jesus as the dawn of the end-time and they replaced Mosaic law with "a new, purely ethical, 'messianic' Torah" expressed in the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount (cf. Hengel 1983b: 57). In other words, the "Hellenists" set "the eschatological authority of the revelation of the crucified Messiah Jesus *above* the authority of Moses and therefore the commandment to love *above* the ritual law" (Hengel 1979: 73, my italics; cf. Acts

6:11-14: τότε ὑπέβαλον ἄνδρας λέγοντας ὅτι ἀκηκόαμεν αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος ῥήματα βλάσφημα εἰς Μωϋσῆν καὶ τὸν θεόν ... ἔστησάν τε μάρτυρας ψευδεῖς λέγοντας· ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος οὐ παύεται λαλῶν ῥήματα κατὰ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἁγίου [τούτου] καὶ τοῦ νόμου· ἀκηκόαμεν γὰρ αὐτοῦ λέγοντος ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος οὗτος καταλύσει τὸν τόπον τοῦτον καὶ ἀλλάξει τὰ ἔτη ἃ παρέδωκεν ἡμῖν Μωϋσῆς).<sup>64</sup> That is to say, the "Hellenists" put forward the claims that "the significance of Jesus as the Messiah of Israel essentially superseded that of Moses in the history of salvation: the gospel of Jesus took the place of the Jewish gospel of exodus and Sinai as God's concluding, incomparable eschatological revelation" (Hengel 1979: 73).

In the light of these understandings, it is fair to suggest that Paul's eschatology is one of the most important elements which lead Paul to consider that the law is no longer valid in the new age which has begun with Jesus' resurrection, because the law, at least for the Gentiles, has been replaced, or, at least for the Jews, has been fulfilled, by Jesus' death (*cf.* Käsemann 1964a: 68, 72; *idem* 1964b: 117, 132-135; *idem* 1969b: 82-107; *idem* 1969c: 133-137; Beker 1980: 135-181).

### 3.2.3 Theological Confirmation (Gal. 1:15f.)

Practical reasons are the most important elements in Paul's missionary tactics in relation to the law. This, however, does not mean that Paul abandons the law *only* because it is too difficult for Gentiles to practise. In fact, unless Paul is convinced that the law *can* be abandoned, he will never compromise. The first factor which enables Paul to abandon the law is that, according to Paul, Jesus' death and resurrection cover all the functions of the Jewish law. As a result, observance of the law can be replaced by faith in Christ. In other words, Paul is convinced that the law has nothing to do with salvation and can therefore be abandoned (see

[2.2.2] on Rom. 3:24f.). The second factor is his experience of the gifts of the Spirit among the Gentiles in their uncircumcised state (see [3.2.2] on Gal. 3:1-5).

The third factor is Paul's confession in Gal. 1:15f.:

Ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν [ὁ θεὸς] ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ...

This is a description of "commissioning" (Dunn 1990g: 89), or "calling", rather than of "conversion".<sup>65</sup> Betz claims that Paul understands his being called as an apostle to be "in line with the tradition of the prophetic vocation" (1979: 70). It includes two stages: (1) a "setting aside" for special divine assignment (e.g., Jer. 1:5)<sup>66</sup> and (2) the "call" (e.g., Isa. 41:9).<sup>67</sup> Paul, then, describes his vocation as a revelation of Christ: "God called him by 'revealing his son'" (*ibid.*; cf. Oepke TDNT 3: 582f.).<sup>68</sup> By speaking in terms of revelation, Paul intends to emphasize that what he preaches is not based upon his own ideas, nor those of any other apostles, but is God's revelation (Gal. 1:11f.: Γνωρίζω γὰρ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν κατὰ ἄνθρωπον· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον αὐτὸ οὔτε ἐδιδάχθην ἀλλὰ δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). This statement challenges Paul's opponents who claim that he is not a qualified apostle and that therefore what he preaches is not reliable.<sup>69</sup> Paul, therefore, traces the authority of his apostleship back to God's appointment.

Paul claims that he is assigned as an apostle to the Gentiles.<sup>70</sup> It is, therefore, generally held that Paul preaches a law-free gospel from the beginning (e.g., Räisänen 1987a: 407). This suggestion, however, makes it difficult to interpret Gal. 5:11 (εἰ περιτομὴν ἔτι κηρύσσω, τί ἔτι διώκομαι;). Therefore, the most likely situation is that when Paul receives his apostleship on the Damascus road, he adopts belief in the risen Christ and goes on to preach, mainly to Gentiles the gospel regarding Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection *along with* the requirement of circumcision. He subsequently abandons the requirement of circumcision and other ritual laws because they are too difficult for Gentiles to practise. After Paul realises that his Gentile converts do display the gifts of the Spirit in their

uncircumcised state, he believes that his law-free tactics are appropriate in the Messianic age. When Paul writes Galatians, therefore, he is able to *confess* that the law-free gospel has been appointed by God and was so appointed in his revelation on the Damascus road.<sup>71</sup>

## NOTES

### (Chapter Three)

[1]. Noth indicates that in the 19th-18th centuries B.C., a new ruling Semitic group appeared in Syria-Palestine (cf. 1960: 24). They "seized the ruins of government on the middle Euphrates and in Southern Mesopotamia and there established the 1st Dynasty of Babylon and the ancient Babylonian Empire" (*ibid.*). This is probably the result of the "Aramaean migration".

[2]. Noth says:

"the tradition of the patriarchs as such became part of the tradition of Israel as a whole ... and through its connection with the tradition of the exodus from Egypt and the occupation of the land, it acquired a significance as an article of faith among the Israelite confederation of the twelve tribes which far exceeded the original significance of the cults inaugurated by the patriarchs as recipients of the promises ... Thus the entry of the tradition of the patriarchs into the faith of the Israelite confederation of the twelve tribes made a substantial contribution to the development of the theological explanation of the divine action which had led Israel to its present position in history, a people of God in the land which its God had given to it" (1960: 127).

[3]. Abraham's faith is not believing what God says, but obeying what God demands. Abraham did not believe what God had promised to him, particularly the promise of descendants. For example, God has already said: "I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth" in Gen. 13:16a, but Abraham still complains: "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless" in 15:2a. Other evidence is Gen. 17:15-17. Abraham's response means that he does not believe that God will give him a child (cf. von Rad 1972: 203), so he asks God to allow him to solve the problem of childlessness by means of adopting a contemporary custom, i.e., if a childless woman "gave her personal maid to her husband, ... then the child born of the maid was considered the wife's child" (1972: 191).

Abraham does, however, obey whatever God orders him to do. The most dramatic example of which is his readiness to sacrifice Isaac, the "long awaited son of the promise" (B.W. Anderson 1988: 359).

Abraham's obedient faith in Gen. 12-25 stands in contrast to Adam's disobedience in Gen. 2-3 which leads to human sin in Gen. 4-11. According to Gen. 2, Yahweh has given Adam a garden in Eden which is surrounded by four rivers and where there grows "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food" (v. 9). This is a wonderful place against the background of the desert. Then, Yahweh gives Adam a very easy command: "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat" (vv. 16f.). Yahweh does not say that Adam shall not eat everything, but rather that he may eat everything except one fruit. Compared with Gen. 22, Gen. 2:16f. is much easier. Adam, however, violates this command (Gen. 3:6). As a result, Yahweh condemns Adam (Gen. 3:14-21). This story serves as the overture to the description of human sin in Gen. 4-11.

Indeed, Abraham's obedient faith is presented as the solution to the sin which stems from Adam's disobedience: disobedience results in sins, obedience leads to salvation. Achtemeier indicates the significance of the Abraham story in Genesis as follows:

"(Abraham) is the origin of God's promise of grace to humankind, God's answer to the ravages of human evil outlined in Genesis 3-11. In



Abraham, God undertakes a new beginning, calling Abraham ... to begin a pilgrimage founded on trust in the God who led him out. Abraham is the new beginning because in him God's purpose of calling sinful humanity back to trust in him becomes evident" (1985: 81).

[4]. Dibelius claims that James' understanding of the Abraham tradition, Abraham's merit in particular, is in full agreement with the synagogue: "because of his works, Abraham obtained his place in the heavenly list of righteous people and he is recorded as a friend of God" (1976: 174). Therefore, what James presents is a "Jewish Abraham tradition" (1976: 168).

The offering of Isaac is repeatedly characterized as the greatest of all of Abraham's deeds (cf. Dibelius 1976: 168; 4 Macc. 16:19f.: "and accordingly you owe it to God to endure all hardship for his sake, for whom our father Abraham ventured boldly to sacrifice his son Isaac, the father of our nation; and Isaac, seeing his father's hand, with the knife in it, fall down against him, did not flinch"). James employs Abraham's offering of Isaac in Jas. 2:21 and quotes Gen. 15:6 in Jas. 2:23, thereby suggesting that James recognizes that both faith and deeds are important in the Abraham tradition (cf. Dibelius 1976: 172; Martin 1988: 93f.; Davids 1982: 127, 130). This is the main difference between James' and the Jewish understanding of the Abraham tradition (cf. Dibelius 1976: 174).

[5]. As early as 1909, Deissmann claimed that all Paul's letters are "true" or "real letters" (*wirkliche Briefe*) which are not addressed to the public, but rather to a specific person or persons in response to particular situations (cf. 1909: 224-246). Longenecker, following Milligan (1913: 95) and Selby (1962: 239), disagrees with Deissmann and indicates that Paul's letters were written to Christian believers for "instruction in their common life" (1990: cii).

Hansen, on the other hand, claims that in Galatians, Paul employs a "rebuke-request" form which is common in Hellenistic letters (cf. 1989: 155; 27-54). According to Hansen's analysis (1989: 53f.), the "rebuke section" includes 1:6-2:21 (a rebuke for deserting the gospel) and 3:1-4:11 (a rebuke for foolishness about the gospel) and the "request section" includes 4:12-20 (a personal appeal), 4:21-31 (a Scriptural appeal), 5:1-12 (an authoritative appeal) and 5:13-6:10 (an ethical appeal).

It is, however, more likely that Paul's purposes in writing to the Galatians are both to instruct his converts *and* to debate with his opponents (cf. Barclay 1987: 74: "he [sc. Paul] is talking to the Galatians about the opponents"). In other words, Paul has two groups of audience in mind: a direct audience (the Galatians) *and* an indirect audience (his opponents). Galatians, therefore, has two functions: to instruct the Galatians *and* to debate with his opponents. It is, therefore, not a private letter (against Deissmann), or a letter addressing only the Galatians for a "rebuke-request" purpose (against Hansen), but rather a public "apologetical letter" addressing the Galatians *and* debating with Paul's opponents.

[6]. Sanders claims that Paul's opponents were "'right wing' Jewish Christians" (1983: 18; cf. Cousar 1982: 5f.; Barclay 1987: 88). The reasons are: (1) that Paul describes his opponents' message as "a different gospel" (Gal. 1:6), (2) that he accuses his opponents of wishing to escape being persecuted for the cross of Christ (Gal. 6:12), (3) that he calls his opponents "false brethren" (Gal. 2:4) and (4) that he agrees with Peter's law-bound mission to the Jews (Gal. 2:7-9). This has all the characteristics of an inter-Christian dispute (cf. Sanders 1983: 48f., fn. 6; Betz 1979: 4-9). Schoeps also suggests that Paul's opponents were "the Pharisaic group of Judaizing Christians" (1961: 69). "Right wing' Jewish Christians" and "the Pharisaic group of Judaizing Christians" are, in some ways, similar to "Jewish Christian Judaizers".

Munck, on the other hand, maintains that Paul's opponents were not Jewish Judaizers, but rather Gentile Judaizers (cf. 1959: 89; Barth 1967: 131-146). Munck's main evidence is the present participle οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι in Gal. 6:13.

He understands this phrase as middle voice and interprets it as "those who receive circumcision", *i.e.*, those whose circumcision is being, or is about to be, undertaken (*cf.* 1959: 89). As a result, he concludes that "Paul's opponents who are agitating for Judaism among the Galatians are Gentile Christians themselves (*cf. ibid.*). It is, however, more likely that οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι refers to Jews (*cf.* Betz 1979: 316; Longenecker 1990: 292). Burton claims that ἐὼν περιτέμνησθε in Gal. 5:2 reflects a "future possibility" which indicates that the Galatians have not yet decided to accept circumcision (*cf.* 1921: 273). That is to say, there are no so-called "Gentile Judaizers" in Galatians.

Jewett tries to reconstruct the historical situation in which Jewish Judaizers appeared. He indicates that Judaizing activities are part of the Zealot movement in Judea, particularly during the procuratorship of Ventidius Cumanus (A.D. 48-52). At that time, the Zealots sought to cleanse the land of Israel of all Gentile elements in order to prepare for the coming of God's kingdom (*cf.* 1971: 198-212; 1971a: 17-20). These Zealots wanted to impose circumcision on all Gentiles, including Gentile Christians, so as to make them full Jewish proselytes. In so doing, they hoped to show that they were in accordance with the Zealot purification campaign and thereby win public recognition for loyalty to the Torah. In addition, they hoped to stem the threat to the Zealots from association with the ungodly and the uncircumcised (*cf.* 1971: 206).

Dunn, on the other hand, explains why circumcision and food laws were so important for Paul's opponents in terms of the "social function of the law"; these laws became an indicator of the national identity of the Jews (*cf.* 1990d: 216-219; 1990e: 242-244). Dunn holds that because of "the threat of Syrian assimilation in the second century BCE focused with particular intensity precisely on those bodily rituals which gave Judaism its distinctive identity and marked out its boundaries" (1990d: 217; *cf.* 1 Macc. 1:60-63: "they [*sc.* king Antiochus' inspectors] put to death the women who had their children circumcised ... They [*sc.* Israelites] chose to die rather than to be defiled by food ..."). As a result, the Judaizers insisted that Torah-observance, circumcision and food laws in particular, were essential for Jews and for Gentiles who wanted to become members of God's people.

Both Jewett and Dunn are possibly right. What Jewett points to is the religious background and what Dunn argues for is the political reason. It is clear that during Paul's time, the Judaizers emphasized the importance of the law, particularly circumcision, for both Jews and Gentiles, in response to religious and political pressure.

[7]. Guthrie (1973: 11f.), Betz (1979: 9), Fung (1988: 8) and Howard (1990: xiv) suggest that what Paul's opponents wanted to impose on Galatians was circumcision *and* the rest of the law. Barclay, similarly, argues that what Paul's opponents imposed was "at least some of the rest of the law, including its calendrical requirements" (Barclay 1987: 88). Bruce (1982: 27) and Cousar (1982: 5f.), on the other hand, mention circumcision as the *only* requirement Paul's opponents wanted to impose on the Galatians. Burton (1921: 274) and Longenecker (1990: c) also claim that what Paul's opponents required did not include the whole law.

The critics agree that circumcision is what Paul's opponents intended to impose on the Galatians. The differences in opinion arise from whether or not what Paul's opponents required should extend to the whole law. It is very likely that though Paul's opponents asked the Galatians to observe the whole law, what really concerned them was *only* circumcision. They very likely required the Galatians to practise the whole law, because Paul talks about the whole of the Mosaic law in Gal. 3. They, however, had no real interest in the law apart from circumcision, because Paul accused them of ignoring the whole law (Gal. 5:3) and of transgressing the law (Gal. 6:13). This is in accordance with my suggestion of "membership legalism" (see [2.1.2] on Rom. 2:25-29). Paul's opponents emphasized *only* circumcision which they regarded as the most important symbol of belonging to the community of God's people.

[8]. Beker claims that Paul's opponents "do not intend to apostatize from the gospel; they only want to perfect what Paul has commenced" (1980: 42-44; Gal. 3:3: οὕτως ἀνόητοί ἐστε, ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε;). He reconstructs the arguments of Paul's opponents as follows:

"You Galatians were Gentiles when, through the gospel which Paul preached, you turned to Christ. This turning away from idols and the 'elemental spirits of the universe' (Gal. 4:3, 9) is an important first step ... However, do not mistake the first step for the end of the road (Gal. 3:3). Paul misled you when he told you that your new status as sons of God in Christ depends on faith alone ... When Paul opposes the Torah and Christ, he is not only wrong but also opportunistic, because he wants to make it religiously and sociologically easy for Gentiles to become Christians, in order to enhance his apostolic grandeur. It is simply false that Gentiles can remain participants in pagan society without the 'yoke of the Torah.' The Torah and Christ cohere, because it is only within the realm of the Torah that the promise is fulfilled in Christ ... 'Torah-keeping' means the obligation to become a member of the Jewish people and therefore circumcision marks your entrance into the line of salvation-history that started with Abraham and finds its fulfillment in Christ. The Torah, then, has primarily salvation-historical significance; it assures your participation in Christ by placing you in the correct salvation-historical scheme ... circumcision and Jewish calendar-observances (Gal. 4:10) complete your status as full Christians and guarantee God's divine blessing upon you as true sons of Abraham ..." (1980: 43f.).

[9]. Sanders defines Paul's interpretation of a "proof text" as "a passage from an authoritative source which contains words or phrases that a later author can use to 'prove' his argument, without regard to the original meaning of the passage" (1991: 56). This usage is not concerned with the original meaning of the texts in their ancient context. What is important for Paul is how to find suitable words or phrases to fit his views and to support his statements (*cf. ibid.*). Käsemann also maintains: "Paul's argument from Scripture is worthless for us, since it *ignores* the historical meaning of the text" (1980: 115, *my italics*). It is, however, not likely that Paul used the Scriptures so freely that he completely ignored the original meaning of the texts. If Paul did so, his arguments would not have persuaded his opponents who probably knew the Scriptures well.

Betz points out that Paul intends to demonstrate his statements by some agreed authority, *i.e.*, "to find passages in the Scriptures which had the same terminology" as that which he is using in his argument (1979: 138). Betz also notices that usually "the exegetical conclusions precede the Scripture quotations" (*ibid.*). Therefore, one has to distinguish carefully between what Paul means when he reads the quotations and what these passages meant originally (*cf. 1979: 137*).

Ellis comes to a similar conclusion in his investigation of Paul's use of the Old Testament and claims that in many cases, "the Pauline rendering is intimately connected with his application of the text. These applications make use of common stock interpretations, oral and targumic traditions, and rabbinic methodology" (1957: 148). Paul's "knowledge of Christ opened to him a New Way in which he found the true meaning of the Scriptures" (1957: 149).

It may be the case that, when Paul quotes a text, his "exegetical conclusions precede the Scripture quotations" (Betz), or that Paul's application of the text determines his reading of the text (Ellis). This does not mean, however, that Paul ignores the original meaning of the text completely. It is more likely that, when Paul wants to quote a text, he chooses an appropriate text and then *re-interprets* it according to his understanding of the Christ event. The Christ event is regarded by Paul as God's new revelation of his saving plan which is equivalent to his old saving action revealed in the Exodus and in the Sinai covenant.



[10]. Moberly claims that in its original context, Gen. 15:6 was independent from the Abraham story (cf. 1990: 104, 127; Dibelius 1976: 170). The reasons are: (1) The use of the third person (*he* [sc. Yahweh] reckoned it to *him* as righteousness) rather than the normal "I-thou" dialogue formula (e.g., Gen 15:1-2). (2) Gen. 15 reads smoothly without v. 6 (15:5-7 without v. 6 reads "He [sc. Yahweh] brought him [sc. Abraham] outside and said, 'Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' Then he said to him, 'I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess.'"). V. 6, therefore, serves as a distinctive theological purpose. It is probably an addition, subsequent to the composition of the rest of the story.

[11]. There are three key words in Gen. 15:6: "believed (*he'ēmīn*)", "reckoned (*wayyahšēbehā*)" and "righteousness (*sēdāqā*)".

The Hebrew phrase *he'ēmīn bē* means "making a personal response of confident trust in someone" (e.g., Ex. 14:31), rather than simply to "accept what someone is saying as true" (e.g., Gen. 45:26; Moberly 1990: 105). Furthermore, *wēhe'ēmīn* is "a perfect with *waw* consecutive" which indicates a "repeated action" (cf. *ibid.*; Wenham 1987: 329). Vawter suggests that this verb could be better rendered as "he continued to believe", because it is "a continuous rather than an incipient act" that is meant (Vawter 1977: 207). Unfortunately, the LXX rendered this verb not as imperfect, but as an aorist ἐπίστευσεν, and Paul (Gal 3:6; Rom 4:3) and James (2:23) followed it.

In Jewish tradition, Gen. 15:6 is always connected with the sacrifice of Isaac in Gen. 22 (cf. Dibelius 1976: 170; e.g., Jas. 2:21-23). In 1 Macc. 2:52: Ἀβραάμ οὐχὶ ἐν πειρασμῷ εὐρέθη πιστός (= Gen. 22:1, 12), καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην; (= Gen. 15:6; cf. Moberly 1990: 101, fn.2), the offering of Isaac is exemplary of Abraham's response to God.

Both *hāšab* and *sēdāqā*, according to von Rad's interpretation, have a cultic meaning (cf. von Rad 1966: 125-130; *idem* 1972: 184f.; Davidson 1979: 44; Moberly 1990: 110). The verb *hāšab* has an important "judging function", it is used by priests on Yahweh's behalf to approve the offering presented by worshippers (e.g., Lev. 7:18). Righteousness (*sēdāqā*) is originally "a term of relationship" (von Rad 1972: 185). If a man is called righteous, he "conducts himself properly with reference to an existing communal relationship" (*ibid.*). Moving to the religious use, a man is righteous, when "he affirms the regulations of this communal relationship established by God, say, the covenant and the commandments" (*ibid.*; e.g., Ezek. 18:5ff.).

Another case of being reckoned as righteousness is that of Ps. 106:30-31: "Then Phinehas stood up and interceded, and the plague was stopped. And that has been reckoned to him as righteousness (*wattēhāšeb lō lišēdāqā*) from generation to generation forever."

The story of Phinehas appears in Num. 25. The Israelites had begun to consort with foreign women and to worship their gods (Num. 25:1-3). Therefore, when one of "the Israelites came and brought a Midianite woman into his family" (v. 6), Phinehas "pierced the two of them, the Israelite and the woman, through the belly. So the plague was stopped among the people of Israel" (v. 8). This is why Phinehas was reckoned as righteous (Ps. 106:31), namely because he had done what the first commandment requires: "you shall have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3; Deut. 5:7). The result of being reckoned as righteous is further blessing (Num. 25:11-12).

After Abraham's faith was reckoned as righteousness in Gen. 15:6, God says to him: I want "to give you this land to possess" (v. 7) and "to your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates" (v. 18). When Abraham passes the test of offering Isaac, God also gives him a great blessing (Gen. 22:16-18).

To sum up, the verb *hāšab* indicates a process of assessment which results in an approval, or is an act in which a test is made and a verdict reached. If a man is *šādāq* before God, he has done what God commands. In Jewish terms, he has done what the law requires. Gen. 22 would be a good commentary on 15:6. When Abraham fully responds to God's command, as he does in the offering of Issac (= *he'ēmin bē*), he passes the test (= *hāšab*), and becomes someone who has done what God commands (= *šādāqā*). He, therefore, may receive further blessing.

[12]. The Hebrew *bēn* in the Old Testament can be used (1) as a term for physical descendants and relatives, (2) as a broader term of association, (3) as a term of relationship (a member of a society, group, or fellowship), (4) as a term for relationship to God (cf. Fohrer *TDNT* 8: 341-353). When they claim that they are "sons of Abraham", Paul's opponents probably have the first definition in mind. The use of the term with reference to their relationship to God was widely made by the Israelites. Consequently, they are described as "sons of God" (Schweizer *TDNT* 8: 354). In Ex. 4:22; Deut. 14:1; Jer. 31:20, however, it is the third definition (a term of relationship) which is probably intended when Paul maintains that οἱ ἐκ πίστεως are the true "descendants of Abraham".

Paul's usage is popular in the New Testament. In the New Testament, υἱός is also used as a term of relationship (Schweizer *TDNT* 8:365; e.g., Mt. 8:12; 1 Pet. 5:13; 1 Tim. 1:2). Moreover, a son has the right to share his father's property (Lk. 15:12). It is, therefore, possible that when Paul mentions υἱός Ἀβραάμ, what he has in mind is a close relationship with Abraham, that is, membership in "Abraham's society of faith". This also implies the right to share property with Abraham, that is, the blessings given through him.

[13]. Paul seems not to give a clear definition of "faith" in Galatians. This is partly because the meaning of "faith" is probably a presupposition shared by Paul and the Galatians. It is also partly due to the fact that how to have "faith" is not Paul's main concern in Galatia. In Galatians, Paul does not ask his audience to do anything. Rather he, on the basis of their own experience of the Spirit (Gal. 3:1-5), asks them to refrain from doing anything more in order to become God's people. What really troubles Paul is that his opponents want to persuade them to observe the law in order to make sure that they are members of God's people. Therefore, Paul accuses the Galatians of turning to a different gospel (εἰς ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον, Gal. 1:6b). He strongly condemns those who want to undertake circumcision in Gal. 5:2: ἐὰν περιτέμνησθε, Χριστὸς ὑμᾶς οὐδὲν ὠφελήσει).

Paul appeals to the Galatians' experience in 3:1-5. It is likely that Paul regards the Galatians as already righteous, as already members of God's people. They, therefore, do not have to do anything more in order to become God's people. Or more precisely, they should not observe the law, circumcision in particular, in order to become full proselytes and then members of God's people. As a result, it is possible that Paul simply uses "faith" (or οἱ ἐκ πίστεως) in opposition to the law (or ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου) in 3:10.

Sanders indicates that the doctrine of "righteousness by faith" in Galatians serves only as a "negative category" which is directed against his opponents' argument that obedience to the "works of the law" is the necessary and sufficient condition of salvation and that "a positive definition of what it means to be 'righteous' by faith is not precisely given" (1977: 492). In short, "'faith' is the term which is played off against 'by works of law', although just what faith is ... is not said" (1977: 493).

[14]. In Gal. 3:6-9, Paul claims that οἱ ἐκ πίστεως are the true "descendants of Abraham" and inheritors of the blessings given through Abraham. In Gal. 3:10-14, Paul says: ὅσοι γὰρ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου εἰσὶν, ὑπὸ κατάραν εἰσὶν (v. 10). Paul, therefore, associates οἱ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου with a "curse". What Paul intends to emphasize by means of this antithesis is probably that those Galatians who refuse to

be persuaded to observe the law and who continue to set their hope on faith are οἱ ἐκ πίστεως who will share in God's blessing with Abraham, while those Galatians who are persuaded by Paul's opponents to practise the law and to undertake circumcision are under a curse.

[15]. Betz claims that "the blessing of Abraham is quoted in various forms, none of which completely agrees with Gal 3:8". He, therefore, suggests that the blessing in Gal. 3:8 is in Paul's own words (1979: 142). Burton maintains that Gal. 3:8 is quoted from Gen. 12:3 (1921: 160). Sanders, on the other hand, declares that Gal. 3:8 is based on Gen. 18:18 not on 12:3, since Paul's main concern is the inclusion of Gentiles and the term ἔθνη does not appear in Gen. 12:3 (cf. 1983: 21). Comparing the texts, Gal. 3:8 does not completely agree with either Gen. 12:3 or 18:18, but it is not very different. It is, therefore, fair to say that Gal. 3:8 is based on Gen. 12:3 and conflated with 18:18.

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Gal. 3:8   | ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη                 |
| Gen. 12:3  | <u>ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ</u> πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς |
| Gen. 18:18 | ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν αὐτῷ <u>πάντα τὰ ἔθνη</u> τῆς γῆς |

[16]. Von Rad claims that Gen. 12:1-3 serves as the "real conclusion" of the "universal preface to saving history" (1972: 154). There is a question raised at the end of the primeval history (Gen. 1-11), namely "God's future relationship to his rebellious humanity, which is now scattered in fragments" (1972: 152). Situated right at the junction point between the primeval history of the universe and the patriarchal stories, what is promised to Abraham takes on "universal meaning for all generations on earth" (1972: 154). Therefore, the blessing probably also concerns "those on the outside who adopt a definite attitude toward this blessing" (1972: 159). That is to say, God's saving will has extended "far beyond the limits of the covenant people to 'all the families of the earth'" (1972: 154; cf. Wenham 1987: 278).

[17]. Gen. 26:5: "because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." Sir. 44: 20: "He (sc. Abraham) kept the law of the Most High." Though still in unwritten form, the law was thought to have existed as early as Abraham's time. 2 Apoc. Bar. 57:2:

"For at that time the *unwritten law* was in force among them (sc. Abraham and his descendants), and the works of the *commandments* were accomplished at that time, and the belief in the coming judgment was brought about, and the hope of the world which will be renewed was built at that time, and the *promise* of the life that will come later was planted."

One of Abraham's merits which brings blessings to his descendants and nations is his obedience of the law. Jub. 24:11:

"And all of the nations of the earth will bless themselves by your (sc. Isaac's) seed because your father (sc. Abraham) obeyed me (sc. the Lord) and observed my restrictions and my commandments and my laws and my ordinances and my covenant. And now, obey my voice, and dwell in this land."

The law, however, was obviously given much later than Abraham's time. The Jews, therefore, had to answer the question: how did Abraham know the law? They did so in the following manner (Gen. Rab. 61 [38b]):

"A father did not teach him (sc. Abraham), and a teacher he did not have. Wherefrom did he learn the Torah?" Shimeon explains by reference to Ps 16:7: God used the kidneys to teach Abraham the Torah" (cit. Betz 1979: 158, fn. 53).

[18]. Paul says that the Mosaic law came 430 years after the promises and covenant given to Abraham. This statement possibly derives from Ex. 12:40. Gen. 15:13,



however, gives another figure - 400 years (cf. Betz 1979: 158, fn. 49; Longenecker 1990: 133). The rabbis usually solve this inconsistency by "taking 430 years as the time between God's covenant with Abraham and Moses' reception of the law and 400 years as the period Israel spent in Egypt" (Longenecker 1990: 133; cf. Daube 1956: 400; Str-B 2: 670). However, the exact figure, whether 430 years or 400 years, is not very important for Paul. What Paul intends to emphasize is simply that the law came *so late* that it could not affect the promises given to Abraham. This is confirmed by Paul's use of technical language in the contrast between προκυρώ and μετά in Gal. 3:17 (διαθήκην προκεκυρωμένην ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ μετὰ τετρακόσια καὶ τριάκοντα ἔτη γεγωνὼς νόμος, cf. Betz 1979: 158).

[19]. Betz indicates that κατὰ ἄνθρωπον is best classified as "the general rubric of *exempla* (παράδειγματα; 1979: 154). Because Paul's "example" is taken from the field of law (cf. Bruce 1982: 169), it may belong to the more specific category of *similitudo* (παραβολή; Betz 1979: 154). A generally accepted definition of "example" is "the adducing of some past action real or assumed which may serve to persuade the audience of the truth of the point which we are trying to make" (Quintilian 5.11.6; cit. Betz 1979: 154, fn.6).

[20]. Burton claims that the function of ὅμως is to set an antithesis between ἄνθρωπος and what follows (cf. 1921: 178). Bruce, similarly, indicates that the force of the use of ὅμως is the contrast "between the διαθήκη as man-made and its irrevocability after its ratification" (1982: 179). Therefore, the whole sentence can be understood as "even though it involves only a man's last will and testament, nevertheless no one annuls it" (BAGD: 569 s. v. ὅμως).

[21]. Betz claims that "according to Greek and Roman law a testament can be changed at any time" (1979: 155). He, then, suggests that "Paul's term διαθήκη would in reality refer to the legal institution of the 'mattenat bari'" (Jewish "inheritance laws") which "designates a transaction of property from donor to donee, which takes place at once and is not conditional upon the donor's death, although he may retain his right to usufruct during his lifetime" (*ibid.*). Bruce, on the other hand, indicates that Roman law allows the testator to modify, or to cancel his will at anytime. Once he dies, however, the will is validated by death. From then onwards, no one may change it (cf. 1982: 170f.).

Although the origin of Paul's example is not clear, Paul's own words are clear: "according to legal practice, once a testament has been ratified, nobody has the right to cancel it or add a codicil to it" (Betz 1979: 156). In other words, "God established his covenant with Abraham in an irrevocable manner, so it can never be annulled or added to" (Longenecker 1990: 130).

[22]. B.W. Anderson indicates that there are three covenants in the "history of God's covenants": the Noachic covenant which is a universal covenant with all peoples and even with all creatures (Gen. 9:1-17), the Abrahamic covenant which is a covenant of circumcision (Gen. 17: 1-27) and the Mosaic covenant which is an everlasting covenant (Ex. 31:16; cf. 1988: 365). In contrast to the Noachic covenant which is universal, B.W. Anderson does not explain what the role of the covenants of Abraham and of Moses might be. It is possible that the Mosaic covenant is bound to Israel alone, therefore it is Jewish. The Abrahamic covenant stands in the middle between these two. It includes circumcision, which is Jewish. However, the main function of the Abrahamic covenant is to confirm the promises given to Abraham which are universal; these promises include the blessings of the nations apart from the law. If the Noachic covenant is universal and the Mosaic covenant is Jewish, the Abrahamic covenant is a "mixed" covenant: both Jewish and universal. Paul emphasizes the universal aspect of the Abrahamic covenant, while his opponents emphasize the Jewish side.

[23]. B.W. Anderson points out that in contrast to the Mosaic covenant, the Abrahamic covenant in Gen. 15 has two characteristics: (1) since Abraham does not participate in the covenant-making, this is a "unilateral" covenant; (2) since no laws are associated with the Abrahamic covenant, the purpose of this particular covenant-making is to guarantee the promise (cf. 1988: 364). These characteristics indicate that the Abrahamic covenant is not a typical covenant at all, but the confirmation of certain promises in covenant form.

[24]. B.W. Anderson claims that the covenant in Gen. 17 is different from the Mosaic covenant which may be annulled if Israel does not keep her obligations. The only requirement of the covenant in Gen. 17 is circumcision. Circumcision serves as a sign of entrance into the covenant community, not as the condition of keeping the covenant valid. The covenant in Gen. 17 is, therefore, an "everlasting covenant" which is grounded solely in the grace of God, independent of human performance (cf. 1988: 365). Again, the Abrahamic covenant is not a typical covenant which emphasizes mutual obligations. The Abrahamic covenant is more like a promise of divine protection with no obligations on the human side.

[25]. Longenecker points out that Jewish tradition understands Abraham as having kept the entire Mosaic law. His acceptance of circumcision is regarded as acceptance of all Mosaic law (1990: 133). This tradition should therefore be avoided by Paul. It is, however, not unusual for Paul to employ Jewish tradition and to re-interpret it, particularly when this tradition is unavoidable. For example, Paul's opponents very likely used the fact that Abraham went on to undertake circumcision after being recognized as righteous to persuade Gentile converts to accept circumcision. Paul cannot avoid confronting this tradition. Accordingly, he re-interprets it in Rom. 4:11f.

[26]. B.W. Anderson claims that to possess a land, to become a great nation and to be a blessing to other families are the main promises which God makes to Abraham in Gen. 12:1-2. They are confirmed in Gen. 22:15-18. Other promises function simply as reaffirmation of these three main promises when they are under threat (cf. 1988: 356f.).

[27]. Gal. 3:16 is probably directed against Paul's opponents' assertion. Betz claims that "in Judaism ... the heirs include the Jews and, to a certain degree, the proselytes" (1979: 157, fn. 35, my italics; cf. Longenecker 1990: 131; Wilcox 1979: 2-20). Ps. Sol. 12:6:

"May the salvation of the Lord be upon *Israel* his servant forever,  
may the wicked perish once and for *all from before the Lord*.  
And may the Lord's devout *inherit* the Lord's promises."

Bruce interprets σπέρμα in Gal. 3:16 as a "collective singular" which could refer either to (1) a single descendant, Christ, through whom the blessings are given to all the Gentiles, or to (2) many descendants, all of whom belong to Christ and who are therefore included as Abraham's descendants (cf. 1982: 172). Paul says clearly at the end of 3:16: ὅς ἐστιν Χριστός. Therefore, Bruce's second interpretation (all who belong to Christ) is probably not what Paul has in mind. On the other hand, Longenecker, following Daube (1956: 440-444), claims that Paul understands σπέρμα as a "specific singular". He does so on the basis of a parallel with σπέρμα in Gen. 15:13 (πάραικον ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου ἐν γῇ οὐκ ἰδίᾳ) when many rabbis treat as a "specific singular", referring to Isaac (cf. Longenecker 1990: 132). Longenecker explains what Paul means by using σπέρμα and identifying Christ with σπέρμα as follows:

"Paul is ... invoking a corporate solidarity understanding of the promise to Abraham wherein the Messiah, as the true descendant of Abraham and the true representative of the nation, is seen as the true 'seed' of Abraham" (1990: 132; cf. BAGD: 762 s.v. σπέρμα 2b).

From Christ comes a community which is composed of all who belong to him. Since he is the true σπέρμα of Abraham, those who belong to him are also true descendants of Abraham (Gal. 3:26ff.; cf. Schniewind and Friedrich TDNT 2: 583; Schneider TDNT 3: 721). What Paul intends to emphasize is that the "saved community" should be equated with Israel which has "the blood relationship of the living descendants of Abraham" (Schneider TDNT 3: 721). It, therefore, has the right also to inherit the blessings given previously through Abraham, but now through Christ.

[28]. In Greek usage, κληρονομία means the portion which is obtained by inheritance (cf. Burton 1921: 185; Foerster TDNT 3: 768, 777). In the Old Testament, κληρονομία refers particularly to the possession of Canaan which is given by God to Israel as her own special portion (cf. Burton 1921: 185; Foerster TDNT 3: 759; e.g., Deut. 12:9: Οὐ γὰρ ἤκατε ἕως τοῦ νῦν εἰς τὴν κατὰπαυσιν, καὶ εἰς τὴν κληρονομίαν, ἣν Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν δίδωσιν ὑμῖν).

[29]. Stowers claims that Paul, in Rom. 4, treats his "interlocutor" very gently. Stowers says:

"in the diatribe the interlocutor is not to be thought of as an opponent whom the author is polemicizing against, but rather as a student whom the author is trying to lead to truth by using the methods of indictment and protreptic" (1981: 174).

It is true that Paul argues more gently in Romans than he does in Galatians, perhaps because the Roman church was not founded by him. The members of the Roman church are, however, not the people with whom Paul argues. Paul is, in fact, debating with his opponents - probably Jewish Judaizers - in front of Roman Gentile believers. The situation in Romans is, therefore, more likely that Paul is debating as in a court of law: the Romans are the jury, the Jewish Judaizers are the accusers and Paul himself is the defendant (cf. Betz 1979: 24, on the situation of Galatians).

[30]. Stowers explains that an *exemplum* (παράδειγμα) is a kind of rhetorical proof which either argues "from particular to universal or from particular to particular on the basis of shared similarity" (1981: 171). Since the proof is "rhetorical", its logic does not have to be explicit (cf. *ibid.*).

[31]. Käsemann explains:

"The dying Christ becomes creator of the new mankind by freeing us from the temptation to follow the way of the law on the one hand and from the rebel's despair on the other" (1971c: 42).

The saving significance of the cross, in Paul's view, is that "God's love is given to the sinner, the ungodly, the enemy" (1971c: 45). Therefore, Käsemann concludes that "the justification of the ungodly is for Paul the fruit of Jesus' death" (1971c: 46).

[32]. *Pesikta R. 45* (185b):

"On the Day of Atonement God cleanses Israel and atones for its guilt, as it is written, 'For on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you', Lev 16.30. And, if thou wouldst say, 'Another nation too [he cleanses], know that] it is not so, but it is *only* Israel; for so spake the prophet Micah (7.18): 'Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?' It is *only* Israel that he forgives. When David saw how God forgives the sins of the Israelites and has mercy upon them, he began to pronounce them blessed and to glorify them: 'Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, etc.', Ps 32.1." (*cit.* Cranfield 1975: 234f., fn. 4).

[33]. When Abraham was circumcised, he was 99 years old (Gen. 17:24). When God reckoned Abraham as righteous (Gen. 15:6) and made a covenant with him, Abraham was considered, in Judaism, to be 70 years old. According to the chronology of the Jews, therefore, Abraham was circumcised 29 years after the promise of Gen. 15:6. *Seder Olam R. 1:*

"Unser Vater Abraham war in der Stunde, da mit ihm zwischen den Stücken (Gn 15, 10) gesprochen wurde, 70 Jahre alt. - Da nun Abr. nach Gn 17, 1 zur Zeit der Beschneidung 99 Jahre alt war, so lagen zwischen Gn 15, 1ff. u. 17, 10ff. 29 Jahre" (cit. Str-B 3: 203).

[34]. Sir. 44:21:

"Therefore the Lord assured him with an oath  
that the nations would be blessed through his offspring;  
that he would make him as numerous as the dust of the earth,  
and exalt his offspring like the stars,  
and give them an inheritance *from sea to sea*  
and *from the Euphrates to the ends of the earth.*"

1 Enoch 5:7:

"But to the elect there shall be light, joy, and peace, and they shall *inherit the earth.*"

Jub. 22:14:

"May he (sc. God) cleanse you (sc. Jacob) from all sin and defilement, so that he might forgive all your transgressions, and your erring through ignorance. May he strengthen you and bless you, and may you *inherit all of the earth.*"

[35]. Käsemann claims that "to inherit the world" does not refer to the worldwide extension of Abraham's promise in Sir. 44:21, but rather that "the earthly promise is applied apocalyptically to the future world" (1980: 120). *Mekilta Exodus 14:31:*

"Thus wilt thou find of Abraham that he has taken possession of this and the *future world* as a reward of faith, as it is written, He believed in Yahweh and he reckoned it to him for righteousness" (cit. Käsemann 1980: 120, my italics).

2 Apoc. Bar. 51:3:

"Also, as for the glory of those who proved to be righteous on account of my law, those who possessed intelligence in their life, and those who planted the root of wisdom in their heart - their splendor will then be glorified by transformations, and the shape of their face will be changed into the light of their beauty so that they may acquire and receive the *undying world* which is promised to them."

[36]. Cranfield claims that "to inherit the world" refers to "the promise of the ultimate restoration to Abraham and his spiritual seed of man's inheritance ... which was lost through sin" (1975: 240). Similarly, Dunn says that "the blessing promised to Abraham and his seed ... is the restoration of God's created order, of man to his Adamic status as steward of the rest of God's creation" (1988: 213). According to the context, however, Paul's main concern in Rom. 4 is the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's saving purposes. His emphasis in 4:13 is, therefore, that "to inherit the world" does not come through the law. Given this emphasis, it is unlikely that "to inherit the world" refers to sin or creation. On the contrary, it refers to the Gentile mission throughout the world (= "to inherit the world"), which cannot be achieved by means of the Jewish law. So B.W. Anderson says: the "Christian community moved away from Palestine, out of promised land, Paul re-interprets this as 'inherit the world'" (1988: 366).



[37]. It is very likely that the "whole law" in Gal. 5:3 means simply "the law apart from circumcision". Firstly, there was no such thing as the "whole law", because the law was growing all the time. Betz indicates that in Paul's time "there was wide-ranging debate as to what constituted 'the whole Torah'" (1979: 260). Betz also says:

"There were the 613 prescriptions and prohibitions which made up the Torah according to the rabbis. But there were also various attempts made by the rabbis to reduce the number of demands to their common denominator, in order to make it possible to keep the whole Torah" (1979: 260).

*E.g. Sabbat 31a:*

"On another occasion it happened that a certain heathen came before Shammai and said to him, 'Make me a proselyte, on the condition that you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot.' Thereupon he repulsed him with the builder's cubit which was in his hand. When he went before Hillel, he said to him, 'What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor: that is the whole Torah, while the rest is the commentary thereof; go and learn it' (*cit.* Betz 1979: 260, fn. 64).

Because there was no such collection called the "whole Torah", Paul had no reason to talk about it.

Secondly, Paul is arguing against his opponents' "membership legalism" in Gal. 5:3. Paul's statement of the "whole law" is, therefore, used in contrast to circumcision which is the central element of "membership legalism". It is, therefore, fair to suggest that the "whole law" in Gal. 5:3 means simply "the rest of the law", that is, "the law apart from circumcision".

[38]. Burton claims that Paul's opponents are persuading the Galatians to accept circumcision, but have not proposed that they should keep the whole law. He suggests that Paul's reason for rejecting this proposal is because the whole law is a heavy burden, which Christians are not obliged to assume (*cf.* 1921: 274f.; Longenecker 1990: 226f.). In fact, Paul's opponents have not asked the Galatians to obey the whole law, because they themselves have no interest in the whole law (Gal. 6:13). Therefore, Paul is not telling the Galatians that they are not under the obligation to observe the whole law, but he is criticizing his opponents of their emphasis on circumcision alone.

Bruce maintains that what Paul wants to tell the Galatians is this: "circumcision carries with it the obligation to keep the whole law, and this you are quite unable to do" (1982: 231). Again, in Gal. 5:3, Paul is not talking about the possibility of the Galatians being able to obey the law. Rather he is challenging his opponents. Moreover, Paul never seems to think that to obey the whole law is impossible, but, on the contrary, he says: κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γεγόμενος ἀμεμπτος (Phil. 3:6).

[39]. Bultmann claims that "hope" has three elements: expectation of the future, trust in this expectation and patience to wait for it (*cf.* TDNT 2: 531). Bultmann explains:

"Christian hope rests on the divine act of salvation accomplished in Christ, and, since this is eschatological, hope itself is an eschatological blessing, i.e., now is the time when we may have confidence. The waiting which is part of ἐλπίς is effected by the Spirit as the gift of the last time, and it rests on πίστις in the act of salvation" (TDNT 2: 532).

[40]. In 1 Cor. 1:10-13, 3:1-9, Paul seems to give us another picture. There, Paul blames the Corinthians for their divisions and encourages them: διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες καὶ μὴ ᾖ ἐν ὑμῖν σχίσματα, ἥτε δὲ κατηρτισμένοι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοῒ καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ

γνώμη (1 Cor. 1:10). Paul's attitude in 1 Cor. actually contradicts his struggle with Peter in Antioch (see [4.1.1] on Gal. 2:11-14). It is most likely that Paul does have a struggle with Peter as he suggests in Gal. 2:11-14. In Antioch and Galatia, Paul shows his hostility to Peter, possibly because Peter's group is threatening the existence of his own group. Peter's group is persuading Paul's converts to swing from Paul's group to his opponents' group, therefore, Paul has to fight to survive.

In Corinth, the situation seems to be more complex. There are not two groups, but four (1 Cor. 1:12; or perhaps only three, cf. Conzelmann 1975: 33f.). Moreover, Paul's main opponent in Corinth is Apollos rather than Peter (1 Cor. 3:1-9). Fee explains the characteristics of Apollos as follows:

"It is not so much that Apollos himself advocated understanding the gospel in terms of wisdom - although this cannot be ruled out, given his origins in Alexandria, the home of his contemporary, the Jewish Platonist Philo - but that the Corinthians themselves had become enamored with *sophia* and saw Apollos as best fitting their new understanding. This would be especially so if their love of wisdom included a fascination for the values of the Greek philosophical, rhetorical tradition" (1987: 56f.).

It is, therefore, fair to conclude that Paul's different attitude to his opponents in Galatia and in Corinth is due to the fact that he is facing different opponents.

[41]. Sanders says:

"the argument about 'faith' in Rom. 1-4 is not *for* some one definite definition of faith, but primarily *against* the requirement of salvation by the law. The positive argument of Rom. 1-4 is that Jews and Gentiles stand on an equal footing ... and this requires the negative argument against the law, which is contrasted with faith. But no one positive definition of faith emerges from the argument ... Faith represents man's entire response to the salvation offered in Jesus Christ, *apart from law*; and *the argument for faith is really an argument against the law*. Without denying the qualities of trust and obedience to Paul's understanding of faith, we should conclude that the actual *argument* in Rom. 4 is formal and terminological. Paul wishes to counter the claim of the law. He does so with the term 'faith', using different arguments and Old Testament passages, in the course of which the meaning of 'faith' shifts" (1977: 490f., his italics).

[42]. Most commentators (e.g., Achtemeier, Barrett, Black, Cranfield, Dunn, Käsemann and Ziesler) lay their emphasis on exegeting Rom. 4:18-20 and ignore that this statement, in fact, contradicts Gen. 17:15-17. Abraham's response implies that he does not believe that God will give him a child (von Rad 1972: 203), for he asks God to allow him to solve the problem of childlessness by means of adopting a contemporary custom, i.e., if a childless woman "gave her personal maid to her husband ... then the child born of the maid was considered the wife's child" (1972: 191).

Consequently, it is fair to say that what Paul says about Abraham's faith in Rom. 4:17-21 is not in line with the original story, nor his re-interpretation of it, but rather his *own* understanding.

[43]. Cranfield claims that ὅς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν and ἡγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν are different. He says:

"it would be a mistake to conclude that the formation of the two clauses has been controlled solely by rhetorical considerations. For what was necessitated by our sins was, in the first place, Christ's atoning death, and yet, had His death not been followed by His resurrection, it would not have been God's mighty deed for our justification" (1975: 252).

Most commentators are very likely right to suggest that these two events are similar (cf. Käsemann 1980: 129; Barrett 1991: 94; Ziesler 1989: 134). Paul does



not distinguish Jesus' death and resurrection so clearly. In Paul, Jesus' death and resurrection are a "single event" (Käsemann 1980: 129). Consequently, "Paul does not mean to describe one consequence to the death, another to the resurrection. The two events jointly were responsible for both consequences" (Barrett 1991: 94; cf. Ziesler 1989: 134).

[44]. Both Cranfield and Käsemann interpret "ungodly" as an ethical category, referring to a transgressor who does something wrong. The reason for regarding Abraham as "ungodly" is, therefore, that he is reckoned as righteous apart from his achievement. Paul's opponents perhaps claim that without this achievement, Abraham is "ungodly", that is, he is a man who is immoral. Cranfield says that "to say that Abraham was one who had no claim on God on the ground of works ... is tantamount to saying that he was ungodly ... a sinner" (Cranfield 1975: 232; cf. Käsemann 1980: 111f.). What concerns Paul in Rom. 4, however, is the inclusion of Gentiles. In Paul's mind, therefore, Abraham's "works" are more likely to be the "works of the law", circumcision in particular, than ethical achievement. Abraham is regarded as "ungodly", because he was originally a pagan who was not of God's people. What Paul's opponents claim is probably that without circumcision, Abraham would have remained "ungodly", that is, a pagan outside the covenantal community.

[45]. In Rom. 4:5, Abraham is very likely regarded as "ungodly", that is, as a Gentile (against Ziesler 1989: 126). In Judaism, Abraham is considered as the first proselyte who "saw the enormity of idolatry and disseminated worship of the one true God" (Jeremias *TDNT* 1: 8; cf. Dunn 1988: 205). *Jos. Ant.* 1:155:

"for he (sc. Abraham) was the first that ventured to publish this notion, That there was but one God, the Creator of the universe; and that, as to other [gods] ..."

*Jub.* 11:16f.:

"And he (sc. Abraham) separated from his father so that he might not worship the idols with him. And he began to pray to the Creator of all ..."

[46]. For example, Segal claims that "Paul's description of Torah is a consequence of his conversion experience" (1990: 148). Segal explains:

"Paul's conversion experience turns scripture on its head and makes it come true in an ironic, unexpected way, which can be schematized as follows: If the law is a medium of salvation, as Paul had believed when he was a Pharisee, then there can be no crucified Christ. Since he knows from his mystical experience that there is a divine, crucified messiah, then Torah cannot be the medium of salvation in the way he originally thought" (1990: 123).

Hengel says:

"the appearance of the risen Christ before Damascus meant a radical break with the whole of his previous past. The place of the law as the way to salvation was taken by the crucified Messiah ... Instead of speaking of Paul's conversion we would do better to describe it as his calling. This calling forms the basis of his whole theology" (1983b: 53).

[47]. Betz claims:

"Strictly speaking ... we cannot speak at all of a 'conversion' of Paul. As Galatians reports, Paul was 'called' to be a missionary to the Gentiles, and he changed parties within Judaism from Pharisaism to Jewish Christianity. At the time of this shift, Jewish Christianity was still a movement within Judaism, so that one should not call it a 'conversion' from Judaism to Christianity" (1979: 64; cf. Dunn 1990g: 89).

[48]. Sanders says:

"Paul's polemic against the law, and consequently against doing the law, was his exclusivist soteriology. Since salvation is only by Christ, the following of *any* other path is wrong. Paul does say that faith excludes boasting ... The warning is against boasting of the relationship to God which is *evidenced* by *possession* of the law and against being smug about the *knowledge* of God's will while in fact transgressing. Paul regarded zeal for the law itself as a good thing (Rom. 10.2; Phil. 3.6). What is wrong with it is ... *that it is not worth anything in comparison with being in Christ* (Phil. 3.4-11). The fundamental critique of the law is that following the law does not result in being found in Christ; for salvation and the gift of the Spirit come only by faith (Rom. 10.10; Gal. 3.1-5). Doing the law, in short, is wrong only because it is not faith. In itself obedience to the law is a good thing (Rom. 2.13), just as circumcision in itself is a good thing (2.25-3.2) and is faulted only when it seems to threaten the exclusiveness of salvation by faith in Christ" (1977: 550, his italics; cf. 1983: 47).

[49]. Betz says in his comments on Gal. 5:11:

"What the Apostle has precisely in mind will in all likelihood always be hidden from our knowledge. Presumably, he refers to matters known to the Galatians as well as to himself, but unknown to us" (1979: 268).

This is probably right. Paul was writing letters to churches in the first century, not to us today. There was much common knowledge, shared by Paul and his audience, but unknown to us. Paul did not have to mention these ideas every time. Our ignorance of these accounts for some of the difficulties in understanding Paul's epistles. Because we are reading Paul's "incomplete" letters, we have to employ materials outside his epistles and sometimes to make guesses as to what Paul really has in mind which is hidden behind his words.

[50]. Sanders claims that the basis of Paul's abandonment of the law is his "exclusivist soteriology": since salvation is only in Christ, any other path, including the law, is wrong (cf. 1977: 519, 550-552; 1983: 143.). Paul certainly rejects the law as significant for salvation. However, he still insists that the law is an appropriate way for Jews to respond to God's saving grace in Christ's death and resurrection. Paul does not, therefore, exclude the law completely, but rejects it when he is dealing with Gentiles. The reason for his abandonment of the law is more likely to be the practical difficulties involved in keeping it, than an "exclusivist soteriology".

Räsänen is, therefore, right to claim that Paul's theology about justification by faith and about the law was "not complete with his conversion" and that "the practice was ... the mother of the theory" (1987a: 416). His reason is that the justification terminology does not occur until Gal. 2:16. He maintains:

"it was in Antioch around AD 50 that Paul emerged as a preacher of justification by faith, rather than on the Damascus road in the thirties. In view of the total absence of justification terminology in Gal 1.11-17 one should *not* claim that Paul in this passage *grounds* his gospel of justification *sola gratia* and *sola fide* without works of the law in his call experience" (1987a: 407, his italics; *contra*. Dunn 1990g: 98, 100f.).

[51]. The word, ἔτι, in Gal. 5:11a very likely indicates that Paul first preached the gospel along with circumcision as other Judaizers did, but afterwards changed his tactic and preached the cross of Christ without circumcision. This is perhaps the reason why his opponents, possibly his former colleagues, persecuted him. Burton and Watson claim that in Gal. 5:11a Paul is replying to his opponents' charge, that he still preaches circumcision (cf. Watson 1986: 30; Burton 1921: 286). Paul's

opponents' charge is, however, more likely that Paul no longer preaches circumcision. Räisänen indicates that "admission of Gentile converts without circumcision" is the main motive for his persecution (1987a: 406). Paul's opponents are Judaizers who emphasize the importance of imposing circumcision on those Gentiles who intend to become members of God's people. If they know Paul to be still preaching circumcision, why do they persecute him? It is much more likely that he is persecuted, because he has stopped preaching circumcision. What Paul means in Gal. 5:11a is, therefore, that if he still preached circumcision he would avoid persecution (*cf.* Sanders 1983: 190f.). In other words, Paul first preached the gospel *with* circumcision, but later on preached the gospel *without* circumcision.

In Gal. 2:3-5, Paul maintains that the Gentile Titus should not be circumcised. It is difficult to decide at what time this event takes place, but it is very likely that it happened in the later period of Paul's mission, when Paul had already abandoned the requirement of the law for Gentiles. This is suggested by the fact that Paul distinguishes his own law-free mission from Peter's law-bound mission in 2:7-9. Furthermore, Paul's purpose in mentioning Titus is in order to support his own position. He argues that if even the authorities in Jerusalem did not insist on imposing circumcision on Gentiles, why then should the "men from James" (2:11-14; see [4.1.1] and [2.1.2] on 1 Cor. 9:20)? Consequently, Gal. 2:3-5 cannot be the evidence which indicates that Paul opposes circumcision from the beginning of his mission.

[52]. Dunn claims that Judaism is attractive in the Graeco-Roman world (*cf.* 1990b: 145f.). His evidence is Jos. *Ap.* 2:38 (282):

"The masses have long since shown a keen desire to adopt our religious observances (εὐσεβείας); and there is not one city, Greek or barbarian, not a single nation, to which our custom of abstaining from work on the sabbath day has not spread, and where the fasts and the lighting of lamps and many of our prohibitions in the matter of food (πολλὰ τῶν εἰς βρώσιν ἡμῖν οὐ νενομισμένων) are not observed" (*cit.* Dunn 1990b: 145).

Watson criticises Dunn's argument as follows:

"He (*sc.* Dunn) fails here to distinguish between the acceptance of individual customs, such as the observance of the Sabbath, in a syncretistic fashion, and conversion to Judaism through submission to the law and membership of the Jewish community. It may well be that when Greek and Roman writers complain about the influence of Judaism on non-Jews, it is often the former that they have in mind. The attractiveness of certain isolated customs in a syncretistic setting does not mean that conversion to Judaism was attractive" (1986: 189, fn. 69).

In addition to Watson's criticism, Josephus also indicates that Apion often accuses Jews on account of their circumcision, food laws and sacrifice (*Ap.* 2:137, 141). Judaism was, therefore, possibly attractive only to *some* Gentiles, but not to all. Although it is difficult to give a precise indication of how many Gentiles intended to accept Jewish ritual laws, the number is probably very small. If all Gentiles, or most Gentiles, had been attracted by Jewish ritual laws, there would not have been so many "God-fearers" in the synagogues. There would also have been many more proselytes, than was actually the case. Indeed, there would have been no debate as to whether or not Gentiles had to undertake circumcision in order to become God's people, nor would there have been any reason for Paul to provide law-free tactics for Gentiles.

[53]. Josephus tells us that Apion, an Egyptian, reproaches the Jews for their circumcision, food laws and sacrifice. *Ap.* 2:137-141:

"he (*sc.* Apion) accuses us for sacrificing animals, and from abstaining from *swine's flesh*, and laughs at us for the *circumcision* of our privy members ... Apion was therefore quite blinded in his mind when, for the

sake of the Egyptians, he contrived to reproach us, and to accuse such others as ... have ... taught other men to be circumcised."

Petronius *Fragmenta* 37:

"The Jew may worship his *pig-god* and clamour in the ears of high heaven, but unless he also *cuts back his foreskin* with the knife, he shall go forth from the people and emigrate to Greek cities, and shall not tremble at the fasts of *Sabbath* imposed by the law."

[*Iudaeus licet et porcinum numen adoret  
et caeli summas advocet auriculas,  
ni tamen et ferro succiderit inguinis oram  
et nisi nodatum solverit arte caput,  
exemptus populo Graias migrabit ad urbes  
et non ieiuna sabbata lege tremet*]

(cit. Stern 1974: 444, para. 195).

Rutilius Namatianus *De Reditu Suo* 1:387-392:

"We pay the abuse due to the filthy race that infamously practises *circumcision*; a root of silliness they are: chill *Sabbaths* are after their own heart, yet their heart is chillier than their creed. Each *seventh day* is condemned to ignoble sloth, as 'twere an effeminate picture of the god fatigued."

[*Reddimus obscenae convicia genti  
quae genitale caput propudiosa metit:  
Radix stultitiae, cui frigida sabbata cordi,  
sed cor frigidius religione sua.  
Septima quaeque dies turpi damnata veterno,  
tamquam lassati mollis imago dei*]  
(cit. Stern 1980: 662f., para. 542).

3 Macc. 3:4-7:

"but because they (sc. the Jews) worshiped God and conducted themselves by his law, they kept their separateness with respect of *foods*. For this reason they appeared hateful to some ... they (sc. other races) gossiped about the differences in worship and foods, alleging that these people were loyal neither to the king nor to his authorities, but were hostile and greatly opposed to his government. So they attached no ordinary reproach to them."

Jos. Ap. 1:209-211: Agatharchides reports:

"There are a people called Jews, who ... are accustomed to rest on every *seventh day*; on which times they make no use of their arms, nor meddle with husbandry, nor take care of any affairs of life, but spread out their hands in their holy places, and pray till the evening. Now it came to pass, that when Ptolemy ... came into this city with his army, these men, in observing this *mad custom* of theirs, instead of guarding the city, suffered their country to submit itself to a bitter lord; and their law was openly proved to have commanded a *foolish* practice. This accident taught all other men but the Jews to disregard such dreams as these were, and not to follow the like *idle* suggestions delivered as a law, when, in such uncertainty of human reasonings, they are at a loss what they should do."

[54]. See also Jos. *Ant.* 20:139:

"And when Agrippa had received these countries as the gift of Caesar, he gave his sister Drusilla in marriage to Azizus, king of Emesa, upon his consent to be circumcised; for Epiphanes, the son<sup>ck</sup> of the king Antiochus, had refused to marry her, because after he had promised her father formerly to come over to the Jewish religion, he would not now perform that promise."



[55]. Tacitus *Historiae* 5:5.2:

"They adopted *circumcision* to distinguish themselves from other peoples by this difference. Those who are converted to their ways follow the same practice, and the earliest lesson they receive is to despise the gods, to disown their country, and to regard their parents, children, and brothers as of little account."

[*Circumcidere genitalia instituerunt, ut diversitate noscantur. Transgressi in morem eorum idem usurpant, nec quidquam prius imbuuntur quam contemnere deos, exuere patriam, parentes liberos fratres vilia habere*] (cit. Stern 1980: 19, 26, para. 281).

[56]. There are two accounts about Jews who wanted to hide, or to remove their circumcision. Martial *Epigrammata* 7:82:

"Menophilus' person a sheath covers so enormous that it alone would be sufficient for the whole tribe of comic actors. This fellow I had imagined - for we often bathe together - was solicitous to spare his voice, Flaccus; but while he was exercising himself in the view of the people in the middle of the exercise ground, the sheath unluckily fell off: lo, he was circumcised!"

[*Menophili penem tam grandis fibula vestit ut sit comoedis omnibus una satis. Hunc ego credideram - nam saepe lavamur in unum - sollicitum voci parcere, Flacce, suae: dum ludit media populo spectante palaestra, delapsa est misero fibula: verpus erat*] (cit. Stern 1974: 526, para. 243).

1 Macc. 1:11-15:

"In those days certain renegades came out from Israel and misled many, saying, 'Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles around us, for since we separated from them many disasters have come upon us.' This proposal pleased them, and some of the people eagerly went to the king, who authorized them to observe the ordinances of the Gentiles. So they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, according to Gentile custom, and removed the marks of circumcision (ἐποίησαν ἑαυτοῖς ἀκροβυστίας), and abandoned the holy covenant. They joined with the Gentiles and sold themselves to do evil."

It is noteworthy that the first source speaks of a Roman habit, bathing in the public bath. It is also striking that, in the second source, removing the mark of circumcision is connected with building a gymnasium. Those who bathe are certainly naked, as are those in the gymnasium. These are two of the main occasions in which Jews exhibited their circumcision. Accordingly, some Jews hid or removed their circumcision in order to have fellowship with Gentiles.

[57]. Josephus tells us a story about an oil dealer who makes a big profit by selling kosher oil, thereby indicating that kosher oil was very expensive. Jos. Wars 2:591f.:

"He (sc. John of Gischala) after that contrived a very shrewd trick, and pretending that the Jews who dwelt in Syria were obliged to make use of oil that was made by others than those of their own nation, he desired leave of Josephus to send oil to their borders; so he bought four amphorae with such Tyrian money as was of the value of four Attic drachmae, and sold every half-amphora at the same price ... he gathered an immense sum of money ..."

[58]. Augustinus *De Civitate Dei* 6:11:

"Along with other superstitions of the civil theology Seneca also censures the sacred institutions of the Jews, especially the *sabbath*. He declares that their practice is inexpedient, because by introducing one day of rest in every seven they lose in idleness almost a seventh of their life, and by failing to act in times of urgency they often suffer loss."

[*Hic (scil. Seneca) inter alias civilis theologiae superstitiones reprehendit etiam sacramenta Iudaeorum et maxime sabbata, inutiliter eos facere adfirmans, quod per illos singulos septenis interpositos dies septimam fere partem aetatis suae perdant vacando et multa in tempore urgentia non agendo laedantur*] (cit. Stern 1974: 431, para. 186).

[59]. Jews are sometimes protected by a decree, which allows them to observe the sabbath. Accordingly, a Jewish employee may ask his Gentile employer to allow him not to work on the sabbath. So, *Jos. Ant.* 14:263f.:

"Since the Jews that dwell in this city have petitioned Marcus Julius Pompeius, the son of Brutus, the proconsul, that they might be allowed to observe their Sabbaths, and to act in all things according to the customs of their forefathers, without impediment from anybody, the praetor hath granted their petition. Accordingly, it was decreed by the senate and people, that in this affair that concerned the Romans, no one of them should be hindered from keeping the Sabbath day, nor be fined for so doing; but that they may be allowed to do all things according to their own laws."

[60]. After Caius was slain, Publius Dolabella and Marcus Antonius became consuls. Dolabella sent an epistle to all the Asiatics, especially to the city of the Ephesians:

"... the ambassador of Hyrcanus ... appeared before me, to show that his countrymen could not go into their armies, because they are not allowed to bear arms, or to travel on the Sabbath days, nor there to procure themselves those sorts of food which they have been used to eat from the times of their forefathers, - I do therefore grant them a freedom from going into the army, as the former prefects have done, and permit them to use the customs of their forefathers ..." (*Jos. Ant.* 14:226f.).

[61]. Philo *Legat.* 158:

"Yet more, in the monthly doles in his (sc. Caesar's) own city when all the people each in turn receive money or corn, he never put the Jews at a disadvantage in sharing the bounty, but even if the distributions happened to come during the Sabbath when no one is permitted to receive or give anything or to transact any part of the business of ordinary life, particularly of a lucrative kind, he ordered the dispensers to reserve for the Jews till the morrow the charity which fell to all."

[62]. For Paul, the Spirit is "a sign" and "a pledge" of the reality of what is to come (cf. Schweizer *TDNT* 6: 422). In Paul's mind, therefore, the Spirit reflects "the eschatological existence into which the believer is placed by having appropriated the salvation deed that occurred in Christ" (Bultmann 1952: 335).

Barclay claims that the presence of the Spirit is the most important evidence for the Galatians' identity as members of God's people (cf. 1988: 85). Betz argues that in Gal. 4:6, Paul faces a situation in which the Galatians have experienced the Spirit, but are still in doubt as to the question of whether or not they are "sons of God", since they have not accepted circumcision and therefore are outside the Sinai covenant (cf. 1979: 210). Paul, therefore, claims that to experience the Spirit is equivalent to accepting the sonship which discloses the close relationship between God and his people (cf. Burton 1921: 223). In other words, because the Galatians have experienced the Spirit, they are already God's people, God's sons.

In Rom. 8:14-16, πνεῦμα υιοθεσίας refers to "a status of full sonship" which is achieved by the "works of the Spirit" (Black 1989: 113). Jews always think that only they are God's sons (cf. Ziesler 1989: 236; Black 1989: 124; Ex. 4:22f.: "Thus says the Lord: Israel is my firstborn son. I said to you (sc. Pharaoh), 'Let my son go that he may worship me.'"). Paul, however, insists that the Galatians too are God's sons, because they have experienced the Spirit.



[63]. Burton claims that ἀκοή πίστεως is "a hearing (of the gospel) accompanied by faith", i.e., "a believing-hearing, acceptance, of the gospel" (1921: 147). Betz indicates that ἀκοή implies a message which was received by divine revelation and proclaimed orally and heard (cf. 1979: 133, fn. 50). Betz renders ἀκοή πίστεως as "the proclamation of faith" in the sense that "the Christian message 'gives' Spirit and faith to man" (*ibid.*). Similarly, Bultmann understands ἀκοή πίστεως as the "preaching of faith", faith, which he describes as "response to the proclaimed word" (1952: 329).

Ἀκοή has been defined as "the act of hearing, listening", or "that which is heard". Ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως has been described as "the result of preaching which demanded (only) faith" (BAGD: 30f. s.v. ἀκοή 1b, 2b). Longenecker, following this interpretation, maintains that if ἀκοή refers to "the act of hearing", then ἀκοή πίστεως means "hearing about faith"; if ἀκοή refers to "the content of what is heard", then ἀκοή πίστεως is best understood as "believing what you heard", namely "the gospel as proclaimed by Paul which focused on the faith/ faithfulness of Christ apart from the Jewish law" (1990: 103).

Williams argues that "faith is a kind of hearing" and translates ἀκοή πίστεως as "the hearing of faith" (1989: 90). He then explains that both "hearing" and "faith" have passive and active meanings. He says that "hearing is both an active and a passive experience - passive because what is heard comes from outside the hearing self, active because hearing requires alertness, attention" and that "like hearing, faith is both passive and active - 'passive' in that it is the accepting of a word that comes from beyond the self, but 'active' in that this accepting is at the same time an alert engagement, an energetic commitment to the God who is proclaimed" (1989: 92f.).

Barclay, on the other hand, declares that what is important in ἀκοή πίστεως is πίστις (cf. 1988: 85). This is probably what Paul seeks to emphasize by using ἀκοή πίστεως. Because the customary contrast in Paul is between ἐξ ἔργων νόμου and ἐκ πίστεως (Gal. 3:7, 8, 10), or διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal. 2:16), ἀκοή πίστεως and πίστις Χριστοῦ (or simply πίστις) are very possibly similar, if not identical in meaning.

[64]. Another evidence is Stephen's speech in Acts 7. Dunn maintains that, in Acts 7, what the "Hellenists" attack is not the tradition of Moses, but only the tradition of the Temple and the cult (cf. 1990: 273). Stephen emphasizes God's presence outside Judea (Acts 7:2, 5, 8f., 16, 20, 30-33) to reduce the importance of the Temple. Moreover, Stephen even regards the Temple as made ἐν χειροποιήτοις, a phrase which is normally used in criticism of idolatry and paganism. This means that Stephen "calls the temple an idol" (1990: 271). Dunn recognizes that the reason for the persecution is that the "Hellenists" have gone too far and have jeopardized the existence of the whole new sect, because the "Hebrews" are seeking "to preserve their position within Judaism" (1990: 274). Kilgallen points out that Stephen's speech claims Jesus as "the one means necessary for salvation". In other words, he replaces Israel's traditional means of salvation, the temple and Mosaic law (cf. 1989: 192).

[65]. Gal. 1:13f. is possibly to be taken as evidence for arguing that Paul is *converted* and therefore completely changes his convictions as a result of his experience on the road to Damascus. The change in this passage, however, is from persecutor to messenger (cf. Hengel 1983b: 53). The main issue which leads to Paul's persecution and his being persecuted is the "admission of Gentile converts without circumcision" (Räsänen 1987a: 406). That is to say, what is changed is that Paul formerly believed that circumcision was essential for those Gentiles who wanted to become God's people, but that after the experience on the Damascus road he is convinced that Gentiles can be accepted without circumcision. This change does not come from the experience on the Damascus road, but rather stems

from the practical difficulties in Paul's Gentile mission (see [3.2.1] on "practical difficulties"). Accordingly, there is no "conversion" in Gal. 1.

[66]. Ἀφορίζειν means "to mark off from something else", especially "to set apart for a particular service" (Burton 1921: 52), or refers to "the setting aside as 'holy' in contrast to the 'profane'" (Betz 1979: 70, fn. 134).

[67]. The experience of being called is often mentioned by Paul (e.g., Rom. 1:1). Καλεῖν means the choice of a person for salvation (cf. BAGD: 399 s.v. 2). It is used by Paul of the Christian who is called into the community of the saved (e.g., 1 Cor. 1:9). It is, therefore, possible that Paul understands his calling as that which first of all makes him a Christian, and then an apostle. In other words, Paul considers his calling as an apostle to be part of his being called into the community of God's new people.

[68]. Ἀποκαλύπτειν means "a disclosure of something by the removal of that which hitherto concealed it, and, especially, a subjective revelation to an individual mind" (Burton 1921: 50), or simply "divine revelation of certain supernatural secrets" (BAGD: 92 s.v. 2). Betz indicates that "Paul's experience was ecstatic in nature, and ... in the course of this ecstasy he had a vision (whether external or internal or both - 'I do not know, God knows' ...)" (1979: 71).

[69]. Sanders "imagines" Paul's opponents' attacks as follows (they are addressing his converts):

"Did Paul tell you that he is essentially an apostle at one remove? That those who truly know Jesus' gospel are those who followed him in his lifetime and who saw him after the resurrection? That Peter, the chief pillar of the temple of the new age, and the Lord's own brother, James, have priority?" (1991: 55).

And (now they are addressing Paul)

"Not only is your message completely false, you have no rights in this matter anyway. All you know about Jesus you heard second hand. Your supposed gospel is no gospel, and your supposed apostleship is no apostleship. You are a pseudo-apostle, preaching a Jesus who is not recognized by those who actually know him" (1991: 62).

[70]. Watson claims that before Paul became an apostle to the Gentiles, he preached to Jews for some time (cf. 1986: 28-31). Watson, therefore, maintains that Gal. 1:16 is not a reliable source for understanding Paul at the time of his conversion. Rather, because Gal. 1:16 represents Paul's understanding of his conversion at the time he wrote Galatians (cf. 1986: 30). Watson is very likely right to indicate that Gal. 1:16 is a later reflection, rather than a historical record of Paul's conversion. It is more likely, however, that Paul preached to the Gentiles and to the Jews at the same time, although the Gentiles were obviously Paul's main audience. Accordingly, Paul seems to have preached the gospel to the Gentiles from the beginning (cf. Hengel 1983b: 53; Räisänen 1987a: 407).

[71]. Watson suggests that "in Gal. 1:16, Paul is reflecting on his conversion as he now understands it, about seventeen years after the event" (1986: 30).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PAUL'S MISSIONARY TACTICS (3):

#### FOR A MIXED COMMUNITY

In most cases, Paul faced a mixed congregation composed of Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. It is very likely that a mixed congregation often disagreed regarding observance of the law. This kind of conflict probably stemmed from the struggle between "Hebrews" and "Hellenists". These two groups of Jews had very different cultural and religious backgrounds. They also had different attitudes to the law and to the temple (see [4.1.1] on Gal. 2:11-14).

On extending their mission outside Jerusalem, "the Hebrews" mainly went to evangelise Jewish communities. To them, "the Hebrews" preached a law-bound gospel. "The Hellenists", on the other hand, preached a law-free gospel mainly to Gentiles, or more precisely, to God-fearers in the synagogues. When churches were established, two groups of Christians, Jewish and Gentile, as well as two kinds of missionaries, "Hebrew" and "Hellenist", were brought together. It is not surprising that there was serious disagreement in these churches, because their members came from such different backgrounds.

Faced with this kind of congregation, Paul not only had to deal with Jews and Gentiles differently - the Jews obeyed the law while Gentiles did not - but he also had to strive to maintain the unity of the congregation. The most difficult problem Paul had to solve was that each group sought to impose its conviction on the other. Consequently, Paul had to ask each group to respect the other's convictions.

## Paul's Missionary Tactics

The main point at issue in a mixed community was probably whether or not observance of the law was essential for a Gentile to become a member of God's people. Paul's opponents insist on "membership legalism" and claim that observance of the law is essential for Gentiles to become members of God's people. Paul, however, bases his belief on "covenantal nomism" and maintains that observance of the law is optional and that only faith in Christ is essential for the salvation of both Jews and Gentiles (see [2.1.2] on Rom. 2:25-29).

### 4.1.1 The law

When Paul is working with a mixed community, he combines the tactics worked out for Jews and Gentiles respectively and asks each group to adopt an appropriate life-style: Jewish Christians may choose obedience to the law if they wish, while Gentile Christians may not. Then, for the sake of the peace of the community, Paul requires each to respect the others' choice. Neither is to impose his convictions upon the other. Evidence may be taken from Gal. 2:11-14 and Rom. 14:1-15:13.

The conflict between Paul and Peter in Gal. 2:11-14 is normally called "the Antioch episode", or "the incident at Antioch". To distinguish the city in which this episode took place from the 15 other cities of the same name, this city is commonly referred to as "Antioch on the Orontes" or the "Syrian Antioch" (cf. Longenecker 1990: 65).<sup>1</sup>

### THE ANTIOCH CHURCH

What is reported in Acts 11:19-26 is likely the beginning of Antioch church:

Οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες ἀπὸ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς γενομένης ἐπὶ Στεφάνῳ διῆλθον ἕως Φοινίκης καὶ Κύπρου καὶ Ἀντιοχείας μηδενὶ λαλοῦντες τὸν λόγον εἰ μὴ μόνον Ἰουδαίοις. ἦσαν δέ τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν ἄνδρες Κύπριοι καὶ Κυρηναῖοι, οἵτινες ἐλθόντες εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν ἐλάλουν καὶ πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνιστὰς εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν. καὶ ἦν χεὶρ κυρίου μετ' αὐτῶν, πολὺς τε ἀριθμὸς ὁ πιστεύσας ἐπέστρεψεν ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον. ἠκούσθη δὲ ὁ λόγος εἰς τὰ ὅσα τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς οὔσης ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ περὶ αὐτῶν καὶ ἐξαπέστειλαν Βαρναβᾶν [διελθεῖν] ἕως Ἀντιοχείας ... ἐξῆλθεν δὲ εἰς Ταρσὸν ἀναζητῆσαι Σαῦλον, καὶ εὗρὼν ἤγαγεν εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν.

According to this description, we learn (1) that the earliest missionaries who came to Antioch were those who fled from Jerusalem after Stephen's death; (2) that the first Christians of the Antioch church were Ἑλληνισταί; (3) that the Antioch church grew very fast, probably mostly with Gentile Christians and (4) that for the first time, Church members were called Χριστιανοί, a term which distinguished churches from synagogues, or at least the church within the synagogue.

Stephen, one of the "Seven" in Acts 6, was elected as the leader of the "Seven" (v. 5). This election followed the conflict between "Hellenists" and "Hebrews" in the Jerusalem church (v. 1).<sup>2</sup> Although Luke tells us that the conflict was caused by the sharing of the property, the real reason is more likely to have been the different languages used in the liturgy<sup>3</sup> and theological differences regarding the Jewish law and temple.

The earliest Christians, οἱ Ἑβραῖοι, understood themselves not as having a new religion, but as being a sect within Judaism (*cf.* Koester 1982: 2.87; Dunn 1990b: 131; Munck 1951: 3). They continued to be attached to the temple and to observe the law,<sup>4</sup> but paid no attention to the Gentile mission. The temple was still very important for them. Indeed, they were perhaps waiting for God's appearance in the temple to save them (*cf.* Mal. 3:1).

On the other hand, οἱ Ἑλληνισταί did not pay so much attention to the Jewish law and the temple. Οἱ Ἑλληνισταί had very few connections with the traditions associated with the temple and the law. They were, however, not originally "liberal". Hengel points out that it was not the culture nor the economy of Judea that attracted home these Diaspora Jews.<sup>5</sup> The real reason was their religious piety (*cf.* 1983a: 18; 1979: 73; Lüdemann 1984: 74). This situation did, however, provide good soil for the growth of the Christian message. Therefore many Ἑλληνισταί became Christians.

The Hellenistic Christians criticised the temple and the ritual laws, because there was a radically new eschatological message of salvation (see [3.2.2] on Gal. 3:1-5). These ideas turned Jewish religion upside-down. It is, therefore not surprising that οἱ Ἑβραῖοι persecuted them and finally expelled them from Jerusalem (Acts 8:1).

The violent persecution of οἱ Ἑλληνισταί did not dishearten them, but, on the contrary served to "strengthen them in their criticism of the Temple and the ritual law" (Hengel 1979: 75). The result of driving οἱ Ἑλληνισταί out of Jerusalem was not to destroy them, but to encourage them to carry on the Gentile mission without reference to the law (*cf. ibid.*; 1983a: 13, 26). Since there was no Temple outside Jerusalem, the central issue of the law would have been circumcision.

Some of οἱ Ἑλληνισταί, then went to Antioch. There, they preached to the Ἑβραῖοι first and then to other Ἑλληνισταί (Acts 11:19f.),<sup>6</sup> It was these "Hellenistic Jewish Christians" (Longenecker 1990: 70; Koester 1982: 2.91) who



established the church in Antioch. This church dispensed its members from observing the law (*cf.* Koester 1982: 2.91), particularly circumcision (*cf.* Haenchen 1971: 365 and fn. 6; Hengel 1983b: 57; Brown and Meier 1983: 33). This was partly because Antioch was far from the influence of the Jerusalem authorities (*cf.* Koester 1982: 2.91) and partly because an atmosphere of tolerance pertained there (*cf.* Longenecker 1990: 70). The Antioch church, therefore, became "the birthplace of the Church's foreign missions program" (*ibid.*) and the headquarters of Paul's Gentile mission (*cf.* Koester 1982: 2.102).

Bornkamm points out that before Christians came to Antioch, there were already two conflicting attitudes to circumcision within the Jewish mission to the Gentiles. The Hellenistic synagogues did not require circumcision of Gentiles who sought to become proselytes. "Orthodox Palestinian Judaism", however, led by the Pharisees, insisted on circumcision for all (*cf.* 1971: 10). The Hellenistic synagogues were probably good places for Hellenistic Christians to preach the gospel to God-fearers. As a result, the Antioch church grew very quickly and finally separated from Judaism with the result that church members were called Χριστιανοί.<sup>7</sup> Conzelmann describes the situation as follows:

"Thus the Christians now are recognized by the non-Jewish public as an independent group. That they are now so clearly distinguished from the Jews of course is related to the fact that now Gentiles are becoming Christians in greater numbers" (1973: 65).

Although Gentile Christians doubtless formed the majority, the Antioch church was a mixed community, because Paul mentions Jews in Gal. 2:13. In Gal. 2:7-9, Paul talks about an agreement in which it is decided that James and Peter should turn their attention εἰς τὴν περιτομήν, while Paul and Barnabas turn εἰς τὰ ἔθνη. This may mean that James and Peter recognized the legitimacy of Paul and Barnabas' law-free tactics for the Gentiles and that Paul and Barnabas respected James and Peter's law-observant missionary policy for the Jews (*cf.* Tomson 1990: 227; Gaston 1987a: 107-115). This strategy would work well when Jews and Gentiles were separate. When they met together, however, problems were likely to

arise. The Antioch episode was probably not the only event of its kind in the early church, but rather only one of a number of events which were caused by this problem.

#### THE ANTIOCH EPISODE (GAL. 2:11-13)

To date the Antioch episode is very difficult. Betz, Fung and Dunn date it *after* the Jerusalem conference.<sup>8</sup> Longenecker, Lüdemann and Conzelmann, however, date the episode *before* the Jerusalem conference.<sup>9</sup> Bruce, differing from these two suggestions, claims that Gal. 2:1-10 was earlier than the council and that the Antioch episode took place *between* these two (*cf.* 1982: 128). It is, therefore, very likely that the Antioch episode occurred *after* 2:1-10 if these verses do in fact refer to the Jerusalem conference in Acts 15.<sup>10</sup>

Paul describes the Antioch episode in Gal. 2:11-13 as follows:

Ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν Κηρᾶς εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν, κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτῷ ἀντέστην, ὅτι κατεγνωσμένος ἦν. πρὸ τοῦ γὰρ ἔλθειν τινὰς ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου μετὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν συνήσθιεν. ὅτε δὲ ἦλθον, ὑπέστελλεν καὶ ἀφώριζεν ἑαυτὸν φοβούμενος τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς. καὶ συνυπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ [καὶ] οἱ λοιποὶ Ἰουδαῖοι, ὥστε καὶ Βαρναβᾶς συναπήχθη αὐτῶν τῇ ὑποκρίσει.

The main questions raised by the description are: (1) What is the charge of the "men from James"? In other words, what is the main point at issue in the Antioch episode? (2) Why do Peter and other Jewish Christians withdraw from table fellowship? (3) Why does Paul rebuke Peter so severely?

The main point at issue in the Antioch episode is table fellowship.<sup>11</sup> It is commonly held that the main point at issue of the episode is food *as such*.<sup>12</sup> According to the context<sup>13</sup>, however, it is more likely that the main point at issue is "the *company*, not the menu" (Richardson 1980: 348, my italics). The reasons are as follows:

(1) Paul does not mention whether the food is kosher or not in Gal. 2. If Paul thought that food *as such* was the problem, or if the "men from James"

thought that this matter was important, Paul very likely would have mentioned it.<sup>14</sup> But he does not. When Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians ate together, the food may either have been kosher or, more likely, non-kosher. Paul, however, never talks about food laws in Galatians. Gal. 2:12 is the only place where table fellowship, rather than the food law *as such*, is mentioned. Therefore, it is highly probable that food laws are not the problem in either Antioch or Galatia.

(2) On the other hand, circumcision seems to be the main point at issue in Galatians (*cf.* Räisänen 1986b: 63f.; *idem* 1987a: 407).<sup>15</sup> In 5:11, Paul says that his main problem in Galatia arises from the fact that he is no longer preaching circumcision. In 5:2, Paul strongly warns the Galatians that ἐὰν περιτέμνησθε, Χριστὸς ὑμᾶς οὐδὲν ὠφελήσκει. Yet more strikingly, Paul highlights circumcision in Gal. 2. There, he says that Titus οὐδὲ ... ἠναγκάσθη περιτμηθῆναι (v. 3). Moreover, in vv. 7-9, instead of using normal terms, οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι and τὰ ἔθνη, Paul employs the disparaging terminology of περιτομή and ἀκροβυστία.<sup>16</sup> The most important evidence, however, is vv. 11-14, for, when Paul describes the difficulties in Antioch, he does not mention the problem of food laws *as such*, but on the contrary, declares that the reason for Peter's withdrawal from table fellowship is that he is φοβούμενος τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς (v. 12). Thus, it is circumcision that is causing the trouble as regards table fellowship in Antioch. It is, therefore, fair to assume that the main point at issue in Antioch is eating with *uncircumcised* Gentile Christians.<sup>17</sup>

(3) The reason why Jewish Christians are not allowed to have table fellowship with uncircumcised Gentile Christians is probably that the "men from James" regard uncircumcised Gentiles as "sinners". Consequently, they forbid Jewish Christians to eat with Gentile "sinners". Paul says in 2:15, Ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἐθνῶν ἁμαρτωλοί. Reading through the lines,<sup>18</sup> this saying probably belongs to the "men from James". That is to say, from the point of view of the "men from James", ἔθνη is equivalent to ἁμαρτωλοί. Paul, therefore, has to defend uncircumcised Gentile Christians by saying that those who are already justified by

faith in Christ are no longer "sinners" in 2:17 (*cf.* Lührmann 1989: 86f.).

Paul does not indicate why Peter goes to Antioch. Visitors travelling between Antioch and Jerusalem were not unusual in the first century A.D. (*cf.* Betz 1979: 105, fn. 438). Moreover, Theissen claims that Peter was one of the "wandering charismatics" and that Antioch was the "home" of such as these (*cf.* 1978: 9). It is, therefore, likely that Peter's visit to Antioch was simply an occasional visit, perhaps a short stop on the way elsewhere (*cf.* Betz 1979: 105).

Paul's opponents in Antioch are the "men from James", though he does not explain who the "men from James" are, nor why they come to Antioch. Regarding the relationship between the "men from James" and James himself, Longenecker suggests that the "men from James" were "delegation(s) from the Jerusalem church arrived at Antioch, probably sent by James to express certain practical concerns of Jerusalem believers regarding the expression of the Christian faith at Antioch" (1990: 73).<sup>19</sup> It is likely that the "men from James" held the conviction of "membership legalism" (see [2.1.2] on Rom. 2:25-29) and that they were very strict as regards table fellowship, because: (1) they came from Jerusalem, the capital and home of the strictest Jews, (2) they were sent by James, who himself seems to have been a very conservative Jew,<sup>20</sup> (3) they perhaps belonged to "the sect of the Pharisees".<sup>21</sup>

The Pharisees were the most important and most powerful group in Jewish social and religious life. The distinctive characteristics of the Pharisees were that they aspired to the highest degree of faithfulness in observance of Mosaic law, particularly the food laws. Although most Diaspora Jewish Christians seemed to be ready to accept uncircumcised Gentiles as church members and although even Palestinian Jewish Christians seem to have been much more open on this issue, the Pharisees continued to be righteous as regards the law and insisted that Gentiles had first to be circumcised before becoming church members. The Pharisees regarded uncircumcised Gentiles as "sinners" and asserted that devout Jews had to be separated from them. This meant that the Jews were unable to have table fellowship with them.<sup>22</sup>

Before the "men from James" came to Antioch, Peter μετὰ τῶν ἔθνῶν συνήσθιεν. For Paul, τὰ ἔθνη always refers to "the Gentiles" (Betz 1979: 107, fn. 445). It is likely that Peter ate both ordinary meals and the Lord's supper with the Gentiles, rather than, as some suggest, either the ordinary meal only (cf. Burton 1921: 104; Koester 1982: 2.106; Cousar 1982: 46; Longenecker 1990: 73) or the Lord's supper (cf. Fredriksen 1991: 554).<sup>23</sup>

The significance of table fellowship is well known in Judaism. Jeremias claims that table fellowship means:

"fellowship before God, for the eating of a piece of broken bread by everyone who shares in the meal brings out the fact that they all have a share in the blessing which the master of the house had spoken over the unbroken bread" (1971: 115).

The significance of table fellowship is in uniting the community in order to share God's blessing in anticipation of the eschaton.<sup>24</sup> The "men from James" and Peter, however, excluded Gentile believers from this table fellowship. This meant that Gentile Christians could not share in God's blessing, unless they became proselytes.

As regards the second question, why Peter and other Jews withdraw from table fellowship with the Gentiles, Paul reports that after the "men from James" came to Antioch, Peter ὑπέστελλεν καὶ ἀφώριζεν ἑαυτόν. The verb, ὑποστέλλω, is a military and political term which refers to "the drawing back of troops in order to place them under shelter" (Burton 1921: 107; cf. Betz 1979: 108). The imperfect tense of ὑπέστελλεν indicates that Peter "took this step not at once, immediately on the arrival of the men from James, but gradually, under the pressure ... of their criticism" (Burton 1921: 107). The other verb, ἀφωρίζειν, is a Jewish technical term which indicates "cultic separation from the 'unclean'" (Betz 1979: 108). In Paul's evaluation, the reason for Peter's withdrawal and separation was that he feared οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς. This possibly means that Peter's shift was not due to his own theological convictions, but because he "'feared' the 'political' consequences of losing his position of power" (Betz 1979: 109). In other words, if Peter

continued to eat with uncircumcised Gentile Christians, he would lose the leadership of Jewish Christians.

Paul says that it was not only Peter who withdrew. Other Jews also συνυπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ. The verb, συνυποκρίνομαι, means "to play the hypocrite together with others" (Guthrie 1973: 85). The phrase, "the other Jews", refers to those other Jewish Christians in the Antioch church, including Barnabas, who followed Peter's change of mind. First of all, this confirms that Peter was the leader of the Jewish Christians. Secondly, Barnabas' change of mind indicates that the persuasion of the men from James had been successful. This episode certainly put an end to the close association between Paul and Barnabas (*cf.* Longenecker 1990: 76). Luke reports that the reason for their separation was the disagreement as to whether or not to take Mark with them to "visit the brethren in every city" (Acts 15:37-39). The real reason, however, was more likely the Antioch episode.

The key word in this verse is ὑποκρίνομαι, "to answer from under", *i.e.*, "from under a mask as an actor did, playing a part" (Burton 1921: 108), that is, as "actors hiding their true selves behind the role they were playing" (Guthrie 1973: 85). The idea conveyed by this verb is that of the concealment of one's real feelings. This means that what Peter really felt about his withdrawal was concealed from the men from James (*cf.* Burton 1921: 108). Paul regarded Peter's action as ὑπόκρισις, because "it did not spring from inner conviction" (Bruce 1982: 131). Betz points out that Peter did not act on the basis of his own theological convictions, but on the basis of political compromise (*cf.* 1979: 109f.).

Paul's judgment was probably over-emphatic, because of the tension and conflict between Peter and himself. O'Neill claims that Peter's withdrawal only reflects "the current state of uncertainty" on the question of association between Jews and Gentiles, which "must have been one for discussion among the rabbis" (1972: 39). This suggestion is possibly right. The conditions of association between Jew and Gentile gave rise to major dispute in the very early church.<sup>25</sup> Peter's attitudes both before and after withdrawal were not unusual at this time: some Jews



associated with uncircumcised Gentiles, but some did not. Peter was certainly not as liberal as Paul, nor as strict as the Pharisees. He was somewhere in the middle. Very possibly he was hesitant about this matter, because he had experienced the Gentile mission. To associate with Gentiles as liberally as Paul was suggesting, however, was still very alien to him. It is, therefore, not surprising that Peter changed his mind so easily from one position to the other. Nevertheless, the question still remains: why did Peter shift from one conviction to another? What was the motivation which made Peter change his mind?

Esler is likely right when he maintains that the motivation for Peter's shift is "social and ethnic", rather than "theological" (1987: 87). He points out that from the fourth century B.C. to the second century A.D., "the Jews were zealous in keeping themselves apart from the Gentiles by means of definite boundaries which were perceived as originating in the Mosaic code" (1987: 84). Consequently, having table fellowship with Gentiles was regarded as destroying "the boundaries which preserved the separate identity of the Jewish people" (1987: 87).<sup>26</sup>

It is, therefore, very likely that Peter was a "middle man" on the issue of association between Jews and Gentiles. When he came to Antioch and stayed with Paul, he adopted Paul's liberal attitude and ate with uncircumcised Gentile Christians. When, however, the "men from James" arrived in Antioch from Jerusalem and accused Peter and other Jewish Christians of eating with uncircumcised Gentile Christians, Peter changed his mind: he returned to a more rigorous attitude and withdrew from table fellowship with uncircumcised Gentile Christians.

Paul not only criticises the change of policy of Peter and other Jews as ὑποκρίεσθαι, but also says that, when Peter came to Antioch, κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτῷ ἀντίστην, ὅτι κατεγνωσμένος ἦν. The phrase κατὰ πρόσωπον itself does not imply hostility, but only a "face to face" encounter (Burton 1921: 103; cf. Longenecker 1990: 72). The verb ἀνθίστημι, however, means to "oppose", "set

oneself against" (BAGD: 67 s.v.), reflecting "the fact that to Paul, Peter seemed to have made the initiative aggression", for this verb usually "implies an initiative attack in some sense from the other side" (Burton 1921: 103).

Paul's judgment of Peter's conduct, ὅτι κατεγνώσμενος ἦν, is severe. Καταγινώσκω means "to condemn" rather than "to accuse" in this context (cf. Burton 1921: 103; BAGD: 409 s.v.). Moreover, Longenecker (1990: 72) maintains that καταγινώσκω means "be condemned before God", rather than just doing something wrong, or being self-condemned "by the inconsistency of his own conduct" (Bruce 1982: 129). This term is also used by Josephus of being "condemned to death" before God (cf. Longenecker 1990: 72; Jos. Wars 1:635).

The range of meaning of καταγινώσκω explored above indicates a tension, not to say a breach, between Paul and Peter in Antioch. First, Paul rebukes Peter severely: καταγινώσκω (v. 11) and ὑποκρίνομαι (v. 13). Second, Paul seems to be very anxious to show that his apostleship is given by God, not by Peter in Gal. 1-2. Therefore, the question arises: why does Paul rebuke Peter so critically? In other words, what is the nature of the tension between Paul and Peter?

Schmithals maintains that Peter's shift would have had an *effect* both on the attitude and the actions of other Jewish Christians: it would lead to their withdrawal from table fellowship. Moreover, their return to life under the law may have been "understood by the Gentiles as a theological decision for justification through the Law" (1965: 69). It is, therefore, these "public effects" that provoke Paul's criticism, for Paul fears the consequences for the Jewish and Gentile Christian communities. If it had not been for these consequences, Schmithals believes, Paul would not have rebuked Peter. He says:

"If Peter had consistently kept to the separate existence of the Jewish Christians ... there would have been no grounds for criticism ... It was his [sc. Peter's] holding aloof from the Gentile Christians after the ἐθνικῶς ζῆν which first created the problem" (1965: 72).

This suggestion, however, does not explain *why* Paul reproaches Peter so *severely*. The problem very likely already existed before the Antioch episode ever took place.

The Gentile mission stemmed from a conflict between οἱ Ἑβραῖοι and οἱ Ἑλληνισταί. When οἱ Ἑβραῖοι expelled οἱ Ἑλληνισταί from Jerusalem, οἱ Ἑλληνισταί went to Antioch and began their Gentile mission. Accordingly, οἱ Ἑλληνισταί gradually became missionaries to Gentile Christians and οἱ Ἑβραῖοι to Jewish Christians. The conflict between οἱ Ἑβραῖοι and οἱ Ἑλληνισταί gradually became a struggle between missionaries, particularly between Jewish Christian and Gentile Christian missionaries.

Peter was the head of the "twelve", the leading group of οἱ Ἑβραῖοι. Once the Gentile mission had begun, James stayed in Jerusalem, while Peter became one of the travelling missionaries who worked among Jews (Betz 1979: 106).<sup>27</sup> It is fair to suppose that Peter was the leader of Diaspora Jewish Christians, while James was the leader of the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. On the other hand, Stephen was the leader of the "seven" who were the leaders of οἱ Ἑλληνισταί. After Stephen's death and οἱ Ἑλληνισταί were expelled from Jerusalem, Barnabas very likely became the new leader of οἱ Ἑλληνισταί and then of the Gentile Christians (Acts 11:22). When the Antioch episode took place, Paul was possibly an assistant of Barnabas<sup>28</sup> and therefore one of the leaders of the Gentile Christians.

Theissen suggests that most missionaries in Paul's time were "wandering charismatics" (*Wandercharismatiker*). These were travelling apostles, prophets and disciples, moving from place to place, preaching the gospel of Jesus as the Messiah and establishing churches everywhere (cf. 1978: 8). Some of these wandering charismatics were Galilean fishermen and peasants who also had wives and children to support (cf. 1 Cor. 9:5f.). Consequently, they, and among them James and Peter, required the support of the churches (cf. Hengel 1979: 102). Barnabas and Paul, however, did not make these demands.

Thus, Theissen claims, there was perhaps established a norm which regarded the requirement of support of the churches as a privilege (cf. 1982b: 53). If, however, a charismatic arrived at a church asking for support from the community, the community could refuse the request, using Paul as an example of financial

independence, for he, unlike some of his contemporaries, did not consider the requirement of financial support from the churches as the missionary's privilege (*cf.* 1982b: 43, 53). It is highly possible that this would create considerable tension and hostility between Paul and other wandering charismatics, including Peter.

The Antioch church was the headquarters of Paul's Gentile mission (*cf.* Longenecker 1990: 70; Bruce 1982: 129; Koester 1982: 2.102) and Paul was one of its leaders. Peter's arrival in Antioch and his challenge to the Jews to withdraw from table fellowship with Paul's Gentile converts, did in fact, seriously damage Paul's Gentile mission and his leadership there. This is why Paul's fight with Peter in Antioch is so bitter: he is fighting not only for the Gentile mission but also for his right to be a leader of it.<sup>29</sup>

#### *PAUL'S TEACHING (GAL. 2:14b)*

Confronted with Peter's withdrawal from table fellowship with uncircumcised Gentile Christians, Paul says,

εἰ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων ἐθνικῶς καὶ οὐχὶ Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῇς, πῶς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαΐζειν;

The first part of the sentence reflects Peter's attitude before the "men from James" came. The second part refers to his and other Jews' withdrawal from table fellowship.

In the first part, Ἰουδαϊκῶς means in "a Jewish manner", or "according to Jewish custom" (BAGD: 379 s.v.), while ἐθνικῶς refers to living according to Gentile custom, in contrast to Ἰουδαϊκῶς (*cf.* BAGD: 218 s.v. ἐθνικῶς; Longenecker 1990: 78). Burton claims that the whole of the conditional clause is grammatically "a general present, describing a habit or mental attitude which, being illustrated by a recent act, may itself be assumed to be still in force". He, therefore, suggests that "Peter had not really in principle abandoned the Gentile way of life, though temporarily from fear returning to the Jewish way of living" (1921:

112). Betz, following Burton's interpretation, maintains that ζῆς suggests that "the table fellowship was only the external symbol of Cephas' total emancipation from Judaism". Consequently, he regards Peter's withdrawal as "self-contradiction" (1979: 112). Tomson, however, entertains the possibility that ἐθνικῶς ζῆς is the charge of the "men from James", which Paul rhetorically employs:

"The whole sentence is charged with rhetoric and functions as a power centre of Paul's argument against forced circumcision in Galatia. It does not describe Peter's diet but the liberal attitude towards the gentile brethren in which he used to be at one with Paul" (1990: 230).

In other words, ἐθνικῶς καὶ οὐχὶ Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῆς is the charge of the "men from James", who thereby challenge Peter about his table fellowship with uncircumcised Gentile Christians and ask him to refrain from it as a faithful Jew. Paul, of course, opposes the challenge, but he still quotes it in order to show how the conviction which it belies is in contradiction with another conviction which he regards as fundamental, namely that people are distinguished from one another not by race, but by the presence or absence of what he calls "faith" (Gal. 2:16). Thus Paul reminds Peter that before the "men from James" came, they had been convinced that uncircumcised Gentile Christians were not "sinners" (2:17). Consequently, to have table fellowship with them was permissible for a faithful Jew. By reminding him of this conviction, Paul goes on to ask Peter to do more.

In the second part, Ἰουδαῖζειν is crucial. Tomson regards Ἰουδαῖζειν as "to live as a Jew", "to adopt a Jewish life style" or "to become Jewish proselytes" (1990: 229f.).<sup>30</sup> Dunn maintains that Ἰουδαῖζειν "is obviously not the same as being circumcised" (1990b: 149). According to the context, however, what is at stake is whether a Jew can have table fellowship with an *uncircumcised* Gentile. It is, therefore, very likely that Ἰουδαῖζειν refers precisely to circumcision (*cf.* Esler 1987: 88: "to become Jews through circumcision").

Paul regards Peter's withdrawal as "compelling" (ἀναγκάζειν) Gentiles Ἰουδαῖζειν. However, what Peter did was not to compel the Gentiles to undertake circumcision, but rather to withdraw from table fellowship. Reading

between the lines, the "men from James" probably did not compel the Gentiles to be circumcised, but only asked the Jews to separate themselves from the Gentiles, saying: "Look! what we are doing is in accordance with the apostolic decree. We do not *compel* the Gentiles to be circumcised, we require *only* the Jews to be loyal to our tradition". Paul, however, regarded separation from uncircumcised Gentile Christians as equivalent to *compelling* them to be circumcised.<sup>31</sup> Burton indicates that what Paul is really concerned about in this episode is "the forcing of Jewish practices upon the Gentile Christians" (1921: 112). He says that:

"when Peter, having first associated freely with the Gentiles, afterwards under pressure from the men that came from James, drew back, carrying all the other Jewish Christians with him, and forcing the Gentile Christians to choose between subjection to the Jewish law and the disruption of their church, this conduct involved an interference with the freedom of the Gentiles which was of most vital concern to Paul as the apostle of the Gentiles and defender of their freedom" (1921: 113).

What does Paul mean by v. 14b?<sup>32</sup> It is likely that he is reminding Peter of what they had agreed and practised before the "men from James" came. He then accuses Peter, by virtue of his withdrawal from table fellowship, of compelling Gentile Christians to undertake circumcision in order to be able to associate with Jews. In other words, Paul prohibits Jews from compelling Gentiles to observe the Jewish law in general and circumcision in particular. Paul's teaching in Rom. 14:1-15:13 confirms this.

What then does Paul ask Peter to do in order to resolve the crisis which is destroying the unity of the Church and damaging the Gentile mission? Paul does not state this clearly in the present passage. It is fair to assume, however, that what Paul asks Peter to do is to resume table fellowship with uncircumcised Gentile Christians. This requires of Peter that he resume the liberal convictions he had previously held and that he desist from regarding uncircumcised Gentile Christians as sinners. Furthermore, Burton points out that Paul's chief concern here is that "the Gentile Christians must not be forced to keep the law, even if to avoid such forcing the Jews themselves had to abandon the law" (1921: 114). Burton says that:



"Possibly he himself had not, till this controversy cleared the air, seen how far the principles of the gospel that he preached must carry him in his anti-legalism, had offered no active opposition to Peter's attempt to bring the Jewish Christians under the law, and only when the movement began to spread to the Gentile Christians saw clearly that the only position consistent with the gospel was that if the law was not binding upon the Gentile, neither could it be really so upon the Jew, and that when obedience to it by Gentile or Jew became an obstacle in the way of the gospel, then both Jew and Gentile must cease to obey its statutes" (1921: 110; cf. Räisänen 1987: 261).<sup>33</sup>

Asking a Jew to abandon Jewish law seems to be contradictory to Paul's teaching of mutual respect in Rom. 14:1-15:13. Richardson claims that in the Antioch church, the Gentiles are under attack and therefore are the weak group there (cf. 1980: 352). Paul always protects the weak by asking the strong to do more in order to keep the unity of the community. In Rom. 14:1-15:13, Paul asks "the strong", mainly Gentile Christians, to observe the food laws (Rom. 14:21; 15:1) for the sake of love (Rom. 14:15); here he asks the strong group, Jews, to abandon the law in order to secure the Gentile mission. Normally, Paul asks the Jews to obey Jewish law and allows Gentiles to be free from it. Sometimes, however, to protect the weak, Paul will break this principle and ask Jews to abandon the law (Gal. 2:11-14) and Gentiles to practise it (Rom. 14:1-15:13). This is because Paul does not regard either observance or non-observance of Jewish law as essential for becoming God's people. As a result, neither observance nor non-observance really matters. I will explain this more fully in the next section (4.2).

#### *SUMMING UP*

The Antioch episode is a model of the conflict over Jewish ritual law in a mixed community. Before the "men from James" came to Antioch, Peter and other Jewish Christians used to have table fellowship with uncircumcised Gentile Christians. The "men from James" were Pharisees. They came from Jerusalem, holding the conviction of "membership legalism" with its strict attitude to the association of Jews and Gentiles. They regarded uncircumcised Gentiles, even Christian Gentiles, as

"sinners". As a result, when they arrived at Antioch, they challenged Peter and the other Jews for eating with uncircumcised Gentile Christians and asked them to withdraw from table fellowship until such time as these Gentiles undertook circumcision. This charge and this requirement seriously damaged the unity of the church and the Gentile mission. Paul, therefore, fought them. He asserted that uncircumcised Gentile Christians were not "sinners". Otherwise Christ had died in vain (Gal. 2:17, 21). This had been, in fact, the conviction common to Paul and Peter before the "men from James" came to Antioch. As a result, Paul reminded Peter of this agreed doctrine and asked him to resume table fellowship with uncircumcised Gentile Christians. Were this reminder heeded, this would have led Peter and the other Jews to break the food laws. For the sake of the weak group, however, the Gentile Christians, Paul asked the Jews to take this step and, in effect, abandon the law. It is fair to conclude that Paul's teaching in the Antioch episode is that he prohibits Jews from imposing on the Gentiles their convictions about circumcision and Jewish ritual law.

#### Romans 14:1-15:13

In this passage, Paul is dealing with a mixed congregation composed of two groups. To one belongs ὁ ἄσθενῶν τῇ πίστει (14:1), to the other οἱ δυνατοί (15:1). There seems to be a conflict within the community, because Paul encourages them not to despise nor to pass judgment on each other (14:3). It is, therefore, necessary to investigate the nature of the conflict. Paul's teaching in this context will then be properly understood.

#### *WHAT WAS GOING ON IN ROME*

Paul does not, in the present passage, clearly indicate who "the weak" or "the strong" are. All we learn from the text is (1) that "the weak" eat only vegetables

(14:2), indeed they are described negatively as μὴ φαγεῖν κρέα μηδὲ πιεῖν οἶνον in 14:21; and (2) that "the weak" person κρίνει ἡμέραν παρ' ἡμέραν (14:5).

Jewish food laws *as such* do not prohibit Jews from eating meat or drinking wine (Ex. 12:8: "They shall eat the lamb ..."; Num. 11:18: "... Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat ...").<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, to be a vegetarian for religious or philosophic reasons was not unusual in the ancient world.<sup>35</sup> Kümmel, therefore, suggests that "the weak" refers to *Gentile* Christians who continue to be influenced by their pagan background (*cf.* 1975: 310f.; Räisänen 1987: 48: he speaks of the "ascetic piety" of the Gentiles). However, Paul's sayings, οὐδὲν κοινὸν δι' ἑαυτοῦ in Rom. 14:14 and πάντα μὲν καθαρὰ in v. 20, may possibly refer to Jewish food laws (*cf.* Cranfield 1979: 694). It is, therefore, more likely that the main point at issue in the present passage is Jewish food laws, rather than Gentile or Jewish vegetarianism. In the light of this understanding, it is fair to suggest that "the weak" in Rom. 14:1-15:13 are mainly Jewish Christians<sup>36</sup> who continue to be concerned with the observance of Jewish ritual law, particularly food laws,<sup>37</sup> while "the strong" refers mainly to Gentile Christians who do not observe the food laws.

If "the weak" refers mainly to Jewish Christians and if the main point at issue here is Jewish food laws, then why do they eat only vegetables and drink no wine? The answer is perhaps that, in most cases, the only meat they could get was εἰδωλόθυτα<sup>38</sup> and the only wine was libation-wine. But why was kosher food not available for "the weak", if the population of Jews in Rome in the first century A.D. was about 50,000?<sup>39</sup>

According to Acts 18:2, Paul, in Corinth, meets Aquila and his wife Priscilla who have recently come from Italy, διὰ τὸ διατεταχέναι Κλαύδιον χωρίζεσθαι πάντας τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἀπὸ τῆς Ῥώμης. This expulsion seems to be the same event which Suetonius reports. Suetonius says:

"Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of

Chrestus, he expelled them from Rome" [*Iudaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantis Roma expulit*] (Suetonius *Divus Claudius* 25: 4; *cit.* Stern 1980: 113, para. 307; *cf.* Cwiekowski 1988: 98; Bruce 1972: 297; Schürer 1986: 77, fn. 90).

It is likely that *Chresto* here is a confused form of *Christo* (*cf.* Wedderburn 1988: 54; Lüdemann 1984: 186, fn. 64; Jewett 1979: 37). Suetonius does not indicate the date of the expulsion, but Orosius, a fifth century church historian, suggests that the expulsion took place in Claudius' ninth year,<sup>40</sup> *i.e.*, A.D. 49 (*cf.* Lüdemann 1984: 2; Jewett 1979: 37).

Dio (c. A.D. 160-230), on the other hand, gives us another picture. He says that:

"As for the Jews, who had again increased so greatly that by reason of their multitude it would have been hard without raising a tumult to bar them from the city, he [scil. Claudius] did not drive them out, but ordered them, while continuing their traditional mode of life, not to hold meetings" [τούς τε Ἰουδαίους πλεονάσαντας αὐθις, ὥστε χαλεπῶς ἂν ἄνευ ταραχῆς ὑπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου σφῶν τῆς πόλεως εἰρχθῆναι, οὐκ ἐξήλασε [scil. Κλαύδιος] μέν, τῷ δὲ δὴ πατρίῳ βίῳ χρωμένους ἐκέλευσε μὴ συναθροίζεσθαι] (Dio *Historia Romana* LX 6:6; *cit.* Stern 1980: 367, para. 422; *cf.* Schürer 1986: 77, fn. 91).<sup>41</sup>

The event referred to by Dio probably happened in A.D. 41 (*cf.* Stern 1980: 116; Jewett 1979: 37; Lüdemann 1984: 164, 187, fn. 67).<sup>42</sup> It is likely that Claudius first forbade the right of assembly in A.D. 41, but that, because this policy could not stop the disturbances, he finally expelled those Jews who made trouble in A.D. 49.

Although Bruce claims that "Christian and non-Christian Jews alike were expelled" (1972: 299; *cf.* Wiefel 1991: 93, 94, fn. 90), many scholars suggest that not all, but only Christian Jews were expelled (*cf.* Wedderburn 1988: 54; Jewett 1979: 37; Lüdemann 1984: 166, 170; Smallwood 1976: 211, 216; Scramuzza 1940: 151).<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, it is clear that most Christian Jews were expelled from Rome.

Wedderburn claims that the first Roman congregation is likely to have been composed of <sup>cf</sup> members of a "Judaizing Christianity": "a form of Christianity which treats Christianity as simply part of Judaism and ... requires of all its adherents, whether they are Jews or not, that they observe the Jewish Law" (1988: 50).<sup>44</sup> This is

probably because the Jews in Rome had a very close relationship with Jerusalem. Leon indicates that most of the Jewish residents in Rome originally came as immigrants or captives from Palestine and Syria (*cf.* 1960: 240). Brown, following Leon, suggests that Roman Judaism consequently had a very close political and intellectual affiliation with Jerusalem and Palestine (*cf.* Brown and Meier 1983: 95). Brown also maintains that "the strongest strain of Christianity at Rome came from Jerusalem in the 40s" (1983: 212). It is, therefore, fair to suggest that the Jews, Judaism and the first Christian congregation all adopted very strong traditions from Jerusalem.<sup>45</sup> They may well have had the conviction of "membership legalism" (see [2.1.2] on Rom. 2:25-29) and have been closely associated with the "men from James" of the Antioch episode. As a result, it is not surprising that the first Christian congregation in Rome was a sort of "Judaizing Christianity".

A conflict seems to have existed even in the first Roman Christian congregation. Suetonius' report indicates that before their expulsion, there were disturbances because of the preaching of Christ. If the first congregation consisted of "Judaizing Christians" who insisted on "membership legalism" and therefore required all Christians to observe Jewish law, it is very possible that they were mainly Jewish Christians and that the preaching which caused such trouble represented a different kind of Christianity, that of the Gentile Christians, who claimed that Gentiles could become members of God's people without reference to Jewish law (*cf.* Wedderburn 1988: 58).<sup>46</sup> This claim was certainly not tolerable for "Judaizing Christians", because:

"this was a message which called in question God's purposes with Israel and God's promises to the chosen people; it was a message that reduced Israel to the level of the surrounding nations, and called in question the value of the distinctiveness of its national way of life; this message removed the incentive to live differently to the surrounding nations, and thus threatened to plunge all into that morass of immorality which the Jews regarded as typical of the surrounding pagan culture" (Wedderburn 1988: 59).

Consequently, conflict arose in the first Roman congregation.

The expulsion, in fact, marked the end of "Judaizing Christianity" in the first Roman congregation and a temporary cessation of the conflict. The number of Gentile Christians very likely continued to grow after the eviction of "Judaizing Christian" Jews. They most likely survived as "house churches" (Rom. 16:5: καὶ τὴν κατ' οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίαν) which consisted mainly of Gentile supporters of a law-free gospel. As this Gentile congregation grew, the new members would have been Gentiles of a like mind, that is, those who saw no reason to observe Jewish law. These Christians are, no doubt, "the strong" of Rom. 15:1.

By the time Paul wrote Romans, Prisca and Aquila had already returned to Rome (Rom. 16:3). This indicates that at least after the death of Claudius (A.D. 54), Jews were able to move back to Rome (*cf.* Wedderburn 1988: 65). When the evicted Jewish Judaizing Christians returned to the Roman congregation, they resumed their criticism of Gentile Christians for their freedom from observance of law. These Jewish Christians are probably "the weak" of Rom. 14:1. Accordingly, two groups of Christians continued to exist in Rome: "the strong" and "the weak". By now, however, Gentile Christians would probably have been in the majority (*cf.* Bruce 1972: 299; Wiefel 1991: 96; Cranfield 1979: 702).<sup>47</sup>

If "the weak" Christians wanted to keep the food laws, they had to look for kosher food. This seems to have been difficult for them. Watson writes that:

"it must have been hard for the Jewish Christian minority to live alongside the non-Christian Jewish majority ... Non-Christian Jews would blame the Christians for what had happened, and the ill-feeling might well have been sufficient to prevent the Christians resettling in the Jewish quarter when the return to Rome took place. They would therefore be forced to live in another part of Rome, where they would be unable to obtain the ceremonially pure meat and wine which was available only in the Jewish quarter" (1986: 95; *cf.* Ziesler 1989: 323; Cranfield 1979: 695).

As a result, Jewish Christians had to go to Gentile shops, if they wanted meat and wine.<sup>48</sup> The *macellum* (μάκελλον, 1 Cor. 10:25: Πᾶν τὸ ἐν μακέλλῳ πωλούμενον ἐσθίετε) sold not only meat, but also "food of almost every description" (Barrett 1982a: 47), including fish, fruit and bread (*cf.* Cadbury 1934: 141). Many scholars (*e.g.*, Lietzmann and Ehrhardt, *cf.* Barrett 1982a: 47) suggest



that all, or at least nearly all, food sold in the *macellum* was εἰδωλόθυτα,<sup>49</sup> perhaps because the *macellum* was always built next to a temple. Cadbury, however, asserts that the reason for the *macellum* being located beside a temple was not because there was a religious connection, but rather because "everywhere all public buildings, whether basilicas, temples, forums or *macella* tended to be located in a central city area" (1934: 141).

Barrett claims that "not all the food sold in the market had been offered to an idol, but undoubtedly some of it had" (1971: 240, on 1 Cor. 10:25; cf. 1982a: 49). Consequently, "only by careful inquiry (ἀνάκρισις)" could a Jew satisfy himself whether the meat could, or could not, be bought (1982a: 49). If a Jew, a Jewish Christian, or a Gentile Christian wanted to avoid εἰδωλόθυτα completely, the best way was not to have any meat or wine at all (cf. 1982a: 50).<sup>50</sup>

Sanders also points out that Jews hesitated to go to the public market for three reasons: "it might be pork, it might have blood in it, or it might be from an animal sacrificed to a pagan god" (1990: 278), because "meat from suitable animals could be found, and the meat would be free of blood. The animal, however, would have been sacrificed to a pagan deity" (1990: 279). In a Gentile environment, therefore, the best policy for strict Jews would have been: "Bring your own food and wine, or eat vegetables and drink water" (1990: 282).<sup>51</sup> This perhaps explains why "the weak" of Rom. 14:1-15:13 have neither meat nor wine, but only vegetables.

In 1 Cor. 8-10, Paul again talks about εἰδωλόθυτα (8:1: Περὶ δὲ τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων) and "the weak" (8:7: ἡ συνείδησις αὐτῶν ἀσθενής). Although the subjects in both 1 Cor. 8-10 and Rom. 14:1-15:13 are similar, the situations are different.<sup>52</sup> In Romans, the issue is that Jewish Christians insist on the observance of Jewish food laws, especially on abstaining from eating εἰδωλόθυτα sold in pagan markets. In 1 Cor., however, the main point is not eating εἰδωλόθυτα *as such*, but rather εἰδωλολατρία: "the eating of sacrificial food at the cultic meals in the pagan temples" (Fee 1987: 359).

Fee claims that the key verses in 1 Cor. 8-10 are 8:10 and 10:1-22 (cf. 1987: 359ff.). In 8:10, Paul points out that those Corinthians who have "knowledge" should avoid ἐν εἰδωλείῳ κατακεῖσθαι, because it is what endangers most those Corinthians whose conscience is weak. In 10:1-22, Paul strongly prohibits the Corinthians from εἰδωλολατρία (v. 7) and πορνεία (v. 8). Apart from these situations, Paul says that Πάν τὸ ἐν μακέλλῳ πωλούμενον ἐσθίετε (10:25) and that εἴ τις καλεῖ ὑμᾶς τῶν ἀπίστων καὶ θέλετε πορεύεσθαι, πᾶν τὸ παρατιθέμενον ὑμῖν ἐσθίετε (10:27). In other words, εἰδωλόθυτα *as such* is no problem, for the Corinthians can eat it on private occasions (10:24, 27). What is really prohibited is eating in a pagan temple and πορνεία, because these are parts of εἰδωλολατρία.<sup>53</sup>

"The weak" Christian in Rom. also abstains from wine. In Greek religion and possibly also in Roman religion, the σπονδή is performed whenever wine is drunk (cf. Burkert 1985: 70; Homer *Iliad* 9:177).<sup>54</sup> Σπονδή is a "*drink-offering*, of wine poured out to the gods before drinking" (LSJ: 2.1629, *s.v.*; *e.g.*, Hesiodus *Opera et Dies* 228: σπονδῇσι θύεσσί τε ἰλάσκεσθαι). The purpose of offering σπονδή is to ask the gods for help (cf. Burkert 1985: 71).<sup>55</sup> It is possible that most wine sold in the public market in Rome would have been libation wine. Accordingly, "the weak" abstained from wine produced by pagans for fear that "it had been offered in libation to the gods before being sold in the market" (Dunn 1988: 827; cf. Ziesler 1989: 324, 334).

Käsemann claims that the observance of the "day" in Rom. 14:5 refers to lucky and unlucky days, because some Christians were convinced that "days stand under lucky or unlucky stars" (1980: 370).<sup>56</sup> In view of Paul's tolerant attitude to the observance of "days", however, it is unlikely that the word, "day", in Rom. 14:5 has here a pagan background (cf. Ziesler 1989: 329). Black, on the other hand, takes 14:5 ("Ὅς μὲν [γὰρ] κρίνει ἡμέραν παρ' ἡμέραν, ὅς δὲ κρίνει πᾶσαν ἡμέραν) to mean that one man "prefers one day over another" while the other "regards all days alike" (1989: 192). He claims that the "day" cannot refer to the

sabbath, because we cannot say that one man treats every day as a Sabbath (*cf. ibid.*). He suggests that "the day" in 14:5 refers to fast days: "one man considered fasting appropriate only on certain *Festtage*, another regarded any day as suitable for fasting" (1989: 193).

It is, however, more likely that the observance of the "day" refers not to fast days nor to lucky or unlucky days, but to the observance of Jewish feast days, particularly the sabbath (*cf. Dunn 1988: 805; Ziesler 1989: 324; Lacey 1982: 172, 182; Lincoln 1982: 367*). This can be supported by Paul's other saying about "days" in Gal. 4:10: ἡμέρας παρατηρεῖσθε καὶ μῆνας καὶ καιροὺς καὶ ἐνιαυτούς. Burton asserts that the "days", etc., here clearly refer to what Jewish law requires, because of "the unquestioned character of the influence to which the Galatians were yielding" (1921: 232f.; *e.g.*, Gal. 4:21; 5:1f.). Longenecker emphasizes the use of παρατηρέω in Josephus (*Ant.* 3:91; 11:294; 14:264; *Ap.* 2:282) and claims that this verb always means "the observance of the Jewish law" (1990: 182; *cf. Riesenfeld TDNT 8: 148*). In this context, "days" in Gal. 4:10 refers primarily to "the sabbath days, but includes also the feasts, which are observed each on a single day" (Burton 1921: 233).<sup>57</sup>

It is, therefore, fair to conclude that "the weak" in Rom. 14:1-15:13 refer to those Christians, including Jewish and Gentile Christians, who are still "harbouring legalistic scruples about feast-days or food" (Black 1989: 189) and who are characterised by "a continuing concern with literal obedience to the ceremonial part of the *OT* law" (Black 1989: 190; *cf. Cranfield 1979: 694*). In Rom. 14:1, Paul describes "the weak" person as ὁ ἀσθενῶν τῇ πίστει, that is, the person "whose Christianity does not relieve them of doubts in the exercise of Christian liberty" (Käsemann 1980: 366). Moreover, Dunn connects ὁ ἀσθενῶν τῇ πίστει with Rom. 4:19 (καὶ μὴ ἀσθενήσας τῇ πίστει κατενόησεν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σῶμα [ἤδη] νεκρωμένον ...) and explains that the reason for abstinence is that "the weak":

"fail to trust God completely and without qualification ... In this case the weakness is trust in God *plus* dietary and festival laws, trust in God *dependent* on observance of such practices, a trust in God which leans on

the crutches of particular customs and not on God alone, as though they were an integral part of that trust" (1988: 798, his italics).

"The strong" (οἱ δυνατοί) or "powerful people", implies "a strength or power which gives prominence and the possibility of dominating others" (Dunn 1988: 837). In the context of Rom. 15:1, what Paul means is certainly not physical strength, but "the strength of superior knowledge and understanding of how God's grace works" (*ibid.*; cf. Theissen 1982a: 121). The result is that "the strong" have sufficient faith to eat anything (cf. Dunn 1988: 799; Cranfield 1979: 730).

There seems to have been a conflict between two kinds of Christians. In Rom. 14:3, Paul encourages "the strong" not to despise (ἐξουθενεῖν) "the weak", and "the weak" not to pass judgement (κρίνειν) on "the strong". This implies that "the strong" were despising "the weak", and that "the weak" were passing judgment on "the strong". The verb, ἐξουθενέω, means to "reject with contempt" (BAGD: 277, s.v.). This indicates that "the strong" regarded "the weak" as "inferior Christians" (Barrett 1991: 238). As a result, Paul had to ask "the strong" to welcome (προσλαμβάνεσθαι) "the weak" and to accept them into their society (cf. Dunn 1988: 798).

The verb, κρίνω, is sometimes used as a technical legal term, meaning to judge, decide, hale before a court, condemn, or hand over for judicial punishment (cf. BAGD: 451, s.v.). "The weak" judges (κρίνει) the conduct of "the strong". In other words, "the weak" regarded eating everything as "unacceptable to God" (Dunn 1988: 802) and regarded "the strong" as "undisciplined Christian(s)" (Barrett 1991: 238), or even as "sinners" (Dunn 1988: 802), because they ignored the crucial importance of the food laws "in maintaining the relationship with God" (*ibid.*). These mutual judgments had already destroyed the unity of the congregation (cf. Käsemann 1980: 367, 369). Furthermore, both "the strong" and "the weak" insisted on the convictions with which they themselves were satisfied and sought to impose these on the other group. Therefore, Paul asks them to accept each other. In other words, Paul requires both groups to *respect convictions other than their own*.

In short, there were two groups of Christians in the congregation in Rome, "the weak" and "the strong". "The weak" consisted mainly of Jewish Christians and some Gentile proselytes. They possibly lived apart from non-Christian Jews and therefore found it difficult to get kosher food from Jewish shops. They ate no meat and drank no wine, but only vegetables, because in most cases the meat bought from the Gentile market was εἰδωλόθυτα and the wine produced by Gentiles was libation wine. In order to avoid εἰδωλόθυτα and libation wine completely, they ate only vegetables. "The weak" also observed the sabbath. On the other hand, "the strong" ate everything and did not observe the sabbath, for they had been freed from these Jewish laws. A conflict arose over the issue of the observance of the Jewish law in the congregation. "The weak" and "the strong" attacked each other. They each boasted of their own convictions and sought to impose them on the other group. Faced with this situation,<sup>58</sup> Paul asks them to respect each other's convictions and in particular *not to try to impose their own convictions on the other group*, because God has already accepted both groups.

#### PAUL'S TEACHINGS IN ROMANS 14:1-15:13

Faced with this conflict in a mixed community, (1) Paul encourages both groups, negatively, not to despise (ἐξουθενεῖν) nor to pass judgement (κρίνειν) on each other (14:3); then, positively, to look for εἰρήνη and οἰκοδομή in the community (14:19) and to allow everyone πληροφορεῖσθαι in his own mind (14:5). In other words, Paul asks both groups to welcome (προσλαμβάνεσθαι) each other (15:1). (2) Moreover, Paul seems to require more from "the strong". He asks them, negatively, not to practise their freedom if it will cause the ruin of "the weak" (14:15) and, positively, βαστάζειν "the weak" (15:1).

First of all, in 14:3 Paul asks both "the weak" and "the strong" to stop attacking each other, because the whole of the congregation is damaged "by the attempts of one of the groups to make its convictions about conduct the sole and

exclusive measure of true and faithful response to God's gift" (Achtemeier 1985: 216).

Paul prohibits both groups from criticising each other (14:13: Μηκέτι οὖν ἀλλήλους κρίνωμεν). He contrasts their human judgment with God's authority to judge and warns them that οὐ τίς εἴ ὁ κρίνων ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην; τῷ ἰδίῳ κυρίῳ στήκει ἢ πίπτει· σταθήσεται δέ, δυνατεῖ γὰρ ὁ κύριος στήσαι αὐτόν (14:4). He thereby suggests that "those acts of judging one another ... run directly contrary to the universal judgment of the one God" (Meek 1987: 297). This is the foundation on which Paul bases his plea to both groups to stop their bickering.

Then, Paul encourages both groups to work together constructively: τὰ τῆς εἰρήνης διώκωμεν καὶ τὰ τῆς οἰκοδομῆς τῆς εἰς ἀλλήλους (14:19).<sup>59</sup> This statement suggests that what is important is not to insist on food laws and therefore to cause disorder, but rather to abandon attacking each other and to seek the peace of the community (*cf.* Foerster *TDNT* 2: 411f.; O'Neill 1975: 230). Peace is the opposite of conflict. Paul already mentions peace with God in 14:17 (οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ βρῶσις καὶ πόσις ἀλλὰ δικαιοσύνη καὶ εἰρήνη καὶ χαρὰ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ). As a result, the use of εἰρήνη in 14:19 suggests that peaceful relationships and intercourse arise from being at peace with God (*cf.* Cranfield 1979: 721; Barrett 1991: 243).

Peace between people is further defined by the metaphor of building: οἰκοδομή. Here οἰκοδομή is best interpreted as "edifice", or the process of constructing one (*cf.* BAGD: 559, *s.v.* 2; Conzelmann 1975: 74). Paul often uses οἰκοδομή and οἰκοδομέω to talk about a community: God "builds up" the community as one constructs an "edifice". The "edifying" of the community is, therefore, the way in which mutual relations within it are strengthened (*cf.* Michel *TDNT* 5: 140f.; Fee 1987: 137, fn. 16: "building up, edifying the church"; Conzelmann 1975: 74f. on 1 Cor. 3:9: θεοῦ οἰκοδομή ἐστε). This seems to be what Paul has in mind in Rom. 14:19. He emphasizes that the Christian church is



God's building. Individual Christians must work together to build up the church by edifying one another, rather than destroy this building by attacking one another. In Rom. 14:1-15:13, edifying one another is probably equivalent to προσλαμβάνεσθαι ἀλλήλους (15:7). What this προσλαμβάνεσθαι means for "the strong" is this: τὰ ἀσθενήματα τῶν ἀδυνάτων βαστάζειν (15:1).

As regards how different groups of Christians should live and work together within the community, Paul gives his instructions in Rom. 12:3-8; he insists that although each has a different gift, each must play his part and not reproach the other. This idea is well confirmed by Paul's teachings in 14:5.

In 14:5, Paul makes this exhortation: ἕκαστος ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ νοῖ πληροφορεῖσθω. Νοῦς may refer to "the faculty of physical and intellectual perception, then also the power to arrive at moral judgments" (BAGD: 544, s.v.). In Paul, νοῦς means "mind" in the sense of inner orientation or moral attitude (*cf.* Behm *TDNT* 4: 958). Bultmann, however, claims that νοῦς does not mean "the mind or the intellect as a special faculty" of a person, but refers to "the knowing, understanding, and judging which ... determine what attitude he adopts" (1952: 211). In Rom. 12:2, Paul maintains that the purpose of the renewal of the νοῦς is to know God's will, that is, what is good and acceptable before God. Only then may one know what to do and what to avoid. This is surely what Paul means when he uses νοῦς in Rom. 14:5 and says that each must make up his own mind as to "what is to be done and what [is] not" (1952: 212). Käsemann explains Rom. 14:5 as follows:

"What the apostle has in view is the renewed reason of 12:2 whose critical capacity leads through the call into a circumscribed sphere to firm conviction and resolute action on the basis of insight into one's own situation, and from that perspective remains open to new situations and the assessment of the brother" (1980: 371).

The active voice of the verb, πληροφορέω, means "fill", or "fulfil" (BAGD: 670, s.v. 1). The force of the passive voice is "to come to full certainty" (*cf.* Delling *TDNT* 6: 310). Putting these meanings together, the verb may mean "fill with certainty" (Moo 1991: 291). This seems to be what Paul has in mind in both

Rom. 14:5 and 4:21 (καὶ πληροφορηθεῖς ὅτι ὁ ἐπήγγελλται δυνατός ἐστὶν καὶ ποιῆσαι).

As to the reason why Paul makes this exhortation, it is commonly held that, because of the disagreements and disputes which have been tearing the community apart, individual Christians may have found it difficult to make up their own mind. Therefore, Paul encourages the waverers among them to make the effort to arrive at a personal conviction (*e.g.*, Cranfield 1979: 705; Black 1989: 193; Barrett 1991: 239). It is, however, more likely that the exhortation is addressed both to "the weak" and "the strong". When dispute about the "day" or food laws arises, Paul is asking them to make up their own minds as to how they express their faith.

In practice, this means that Jewish Christians can choose to observe the food laws and the "day" and that Gentile Christians can choose their way without the Jewish law. There are, however, some limitations. One of these is that each must respect the convictions of the other group (*cf.* Achtemeier 1985: 216). This limitation is imposed on both groups, but especially upon Jewish Christians who are always trying to "convert" Gentiles, asking them to become proselytes first and Christians afterwards. Longenecker claims in his excursus on Gal. 3:6-14 that:

"the Judaizers' attempted imposition of the law on Gentile believers should be treated in the same way as God told Abraham to treat his mistress Hagar and her son: 'Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son (4:30)' (1990: 111f.).

In other words, although Paul allows Jewish Christians to choose observance of the law as the proper way of expressing their faith, he still restricts Judaizers from attempting to impose their convictions on Gentile Christians.

In Rom. 14:1-15:13, Paul does not explain what kind of life-style Gentile Christians should or should not choose. In 1 Cor., however, Paul frequently lays limitations upon Corinthian Christians: there is to be no adultery nor idolatry (5:1, 9-11; 6:9-11; 10:8, 14, etc.). In Gal. 5:19-23, Paul outlines what he forbids and what he encourages the Galatians to do as follows:

φανερὰ δὲ ἐστὶν τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός, ἅτινὰ ἐστὶν πορνεία ... εἰδωλολατρία ... ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος ἐστὶν ἀγάπη χαρὰ εἰρήνη, μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη, πίστις πραύτης ἐγκράτεια.

In short, Paul's law-free gospel to the Gentiles is not free from everything. It still has some limitations, including, in particular, adultery and idolatry. These are contradictory to one's union with Christ and opposed to what God has done for the Christian, namely, justified and sanctified him. Paul's real reason for saying this is probably that he regards adultery as idolatry (*cf.* Fee 1980: 186) and that idolatry is forbidden by the first commandment.

Paul's teachings in Rom. 14:1-15:13 may be summarized in 15:7: διὸ προσλαμβάνεσθε ἀλλήλους. Both Cranfield and Dunn claim that διὸ "sums up and indicates the conclusion to be drawn from the preceding discussion" (Dunn 1988: 845; *cf.* Cranfield 1979: 739). The middle voice, προσλαμβάνομαι, means "receive or accept someone else into one's society, into one's home or circle" (*cf.* BAGD: 717, *s.v.* προσλαμβάνω 2b). In Rom. 14:1, Paul asks "the strong" to προσλαμβάνεσθαι "the weak", that is to receive "the weak" into their group and to treat them as full partners (*cf.* Black 1989: 190; Barrett 1991: 236; Dunn 1988: 798). In the context of 15:7, the force of the words is likely to be "mutual acceptance" in the sense of "everyday recognition and practice of brotherhood" (Dunn 1988: 798).

In Rom. 14:1-15:13, Paul identifies himself with "the strong" (15:1: ἡμεῖς οἱ δυνατοί). More strikingly, he requires of "the strong" more than he requires of "the weak". (1) Negatively, Paul asks them not to do anything which would cause πρόσκομμα and ἀπόλλυναι. (2) Positively, he encourages them to βαστάζειν the failings of "the weak" even if this might mean observing the food laws.

(1) In 14:13 Paul says: Μηκέτι οὖν ἀλλήλους κρίνωμεν. ἀλλὰ τοῦτο κρίνατε μᾶλλον, τὸ μὴ τιθέναι πρόσκομμα τῷ ἀδελφῷ ἢ σκάνδαλον; and in 14:21: καλὸν τὸ μὴ φαγεῖν κρέα μηδὲ πιεῖν οἶνον μηδὲ ἐν ᾧ ὁ ἀδελφός

σου προσκόπτει. In other words, Paul asks of "the strong" not to practise their liberty, if this will cause the stumbling of "the weak", that is, if it gives one's brother an occasion to take offence, or if it puts an obstacle in his way (*cf.* BAGD: 716, *s.v.* πρόσκομμα 2b). The verb, προσκόπτω, in 14:21 means to "take offence at", or to "feel repugnance for" (BAGD: 716, *s.v.* 2a). The reason why what "the strong" eat may be a stumbling block to "the weak" is likely that "the weak" might regard them as making a compromise with the pagan world (*cf.* Stählin *TDNT* 6: 753). Paul provides similar teaching in 1 Cor. 8:9: βλέπετε δὲ μή πως ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν αὕτη πρόσκομμα γένηται τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν. That is to say, the man of knowledge must watch his freedom carefully so as to avoid the situation in which eating in a pagan temple will become a hindrance to "the weak" (*cf.* BAGD: 716, *s.v.* πρόσκομμα 2b).

In 14:15, Paul says: εἰ γὰρ διὰ βρῶμα ὁ ἀδελφός σου λυπεῖται, οὐκέτι κατὰ ἀγάπην περιπατεῖς· μὴ τῷ βρώματί σου ἐκείνον ἀπόλλυε ὑπὲρ οὗ Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν. The verb, λυπέω, describes "the grief and pain caused by outraged feelings" (Black 1989: 196), or "an actual wounding of conscience which destroys the whole balance of the brother's faith" (Dunn 1988: 820). Paul warns "the strong" very forcefully, saying that this wounding will bring about the ἀπόλλυναι of "the weak" (*cf.* 1 Cor. 8:11). Ἀπόλλυμι may refer to "final eschatological ruin", that is "the opposite of the final judgment of acquittal" (Dunn 1988: 821). It is tantamount to saying that one will "lose one's share in eternal life" (Cranfield 1979: 715, fn. 2). Paul claims that if "the strong" bring this about, they are not walking κατὰ ἀγάπην (*cf.* 1 Cor. 8:1).<sup>60</sup>

(2) Paul says positively: Ὁφείλομεν ... τὰ ἀσθενήματα τῶν ἀδυνάτων βαστάζειν (15:1). The use of the verb, ὀφείλω, with an infinitive (βαστάζειν) means to "be obligated" (*cf.* BAGD: 598 *s.v.* 2aβ; Dunn 1988: 836; Cranfield 1979: 730, fn. 1). Hauck claims that ὀφείλω in Rom. 13:8 (Μηδενὶ μηδὲν ὀφείλετε εἰ μὴ τὸ ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν) means "to owe" or "to be under obligation" (Hauck *TDNT* 5: 564). Therefore what Paul wants to emphasize in Rom. 13:8, is that

Christians "should not be in debt to anyone but that they owe love to one another ... they can never be said fully to have discharged this duty" (*ibid.*).

Paul, in Rom. 15:1, regards bearing the weakness of "the weak" as an obligation and the responsibility of "the strong". Barrett defines βασταζειν as to "endure" and claims that "strong Christians must 'endure' the vagaries of their weak brethren and help them in their difficulties" (1991: 247). Cranfield, however, disagrees with this explanation and maintains that what Paul requires is much more positive than "tolerance", *i.e.*, "the strong" should actually "help the weak by taking something of the weight of the burden which they have to carry off their shoulders on to their own" (1979: 730, fn. 2). What Cranfield does not explain is what "the strong" have to do in the context of the Roman congregation.<sup>61</sup>

If the weakness of "the weak" is manifest in their observance of food laws and the sabbath, then, it is very likely that Paul, in his teaching in 15:1, is telling "the strong" that: καλὸν τὸ μὴ φαγεῖν κρέα μηδὲ πιεῖν οἶνον μηδὲ ἐν ᾧ ὁ ἀδελφός σου προσκώπτει (14:21). This exhortation encourages "the strong" to observe Jewish food laws, that is, to abstain from εἰδωλόθυτα and from libation wine.<sup>62</sup> In 14:21, both φαγεῖν and πιεῖν are aorists which would normally be used to indicate particular occasions. It is, therefore, fair to suggest that Paul does not ask "the strong" to change their behaviour all the time, but advises them to abstain from meat and wine only when eating and drinking will cause "the weak" to stumble (*cf.* Barrett 1991: 245; Ziesler 1989: 334).

## SUMMING UP

Achtemeier is right to point out that the main points of Rom. 14:1-15:13 are as follows:

"Paul turns in this section to a discussion of the dangers posed to the unity within the Christian community by different conceptions of the proper response to the gospel of Christ. He frames his discussion in terms of the 'weak' and the 'strong' and warns against setting one's own understanding of the proper response to the gospel as the norm against

which to judge all other responses. Paul feels there is room within the Christian community for differing ways of responding to the gospel with respect to one's everyday life and warns that any attempt to impose uniformity in those matters will rupture the very unity whose preservation is sought" (1985: 214).

In the Roman church, there is a mixed community composed of "the weak" and "the strong". "The weak", mainly Jewish Christians, observe food laws and the sabbath, while "the strong", mainly Gentile Christians, do not. Both groups reproach each other and attempt to impose their own convictions on the other group. Faced with this situation, Paul maintains that *everyone has to make up his own mind and choose his own way of responding to the gospel*. The only condition is that he *does not impose his own convictions on others*. Moreover, Paul requires more responsibility from "the strong". He asks them to bear the weakness of "the weak" for love's sake, that is, not to eat meat nor to drink wine, if eating or drinking will cause the stumbling of "the weak".

#### 4.1.2 Faith

Paul consistently maintains that faith in Christ is the common foundation for *all*, Jew and Gentile, in order that they may become members of God's people. In Rom. 1:16-17; 3:21-22, 28-30 and Gal. 3:25-29, for example, Paul claims that the righteousness of God is given for both Jews and Gentiles. Paul's opponents very likely hold to "membership legalism" (see [2.1.2] on Rom. 2:25-29) and claim that only Jews and proselytes can become members of the community of God's people, because only they possess the sign of the membership of the covenantal community, that is, circumcision. Paul disagrees with this assertion and presents his conviction of "universal soteriology", arguing that *all, both Jew and Gentile*, have an equal opportunity to become members of God's people by means of faith in Christ (*cf.* Sanders 1983: 30-34).



## Romans 3:28-30

In Rom. 3:28-30, Paul says:

λογιζόμεθα γὰρ δικαιούσθαι πίστει ἄνθρωπον χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου.  
ἢ Ἰουδαίων ὁ θεὸς μόνον; οὐχὶ καὶ ἐθνῶν; ναὶ καὶ ἐθνῶν,  
εἴπερ εἷς ὁ θεὸς ὃς δικαιώσει περιτομὴν ἐκ πίστεως καὶ  
ἄκροβυστίαν διὰ τῆς πίστεως.

What concerns Paul here is not the assurance of salvation from a common human predicament, but the possibility of the inclusion of the Gentiles in the community of God's people (*cf.* Stendahl 1976: 84). The noun ἄνθρωπος without the

article has an indefinite sense, equivalent to τις (*cf.* Burton 1921: 120). That means that ἄνθρωπος here refers to human being, which includes both Jew and Gentile.<sup>63</sup> The passive verb δικαιούσθαι is used with ἄνθρωπος and the foundation for justification is faith rather than works of the law. These elements are very similar to Gal. 2:16 (εἰδότες ὅτι οὐ δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). It is, therefore, fair to say that Paul sets out an universal foundation for both Jews and Gentiles to become members of God's people, namely, faith rather than works of the law.

Paul's universal soteriology arises from his doctrine of "one God", a doctrine fundamental to the Old Testament. Clements claims that the Old Testament "intends to present God as one unique supernatural being who had revealed himself to Abraham, Moses and other of the great figures of Israel's life, and who is the Lord and sole Creator of the universe" (1978: 53). In other words, there is a tension in Jewish thought between (1) God as Israel's Lord and (2) God as Creator of all (*cf.* Dunn 1988: 188; Schürer 1986: 159).

(1) God is considered as Israel's Lord only. Cranfield claims that "no Jew of Paul's day would ever have thought of questioning that God is the God of all men in the sense of being their Creator and Ruler and Judge" (1975: 221). An example of this conviction is the comment of Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai (c. A.D. 150) on

Ex. 20:2: "I am the Lord your God". He says that

"God spoke to the Israelites: I am God over all who come into the world, but my name have I associated only with you; I do not call myself the God of the nations of the world, but the God of Israel" (Str-B 3: 185; *cit.* Dunn 1988: 188; *cf.* Cranfield 1975: 222, fn.1; Käsemann 1980: 103).<sup>64</sup>

This conviction, in fact, stems from the tradition of election and covenant (*cf.* Ex. 19:4-6; 20:2; Deut. 5:6; 7:6-9), a tradition which may be summed up by the statement: "I will be your God, and you will be my people". This statement occurs in the Old Testament in different forms in about 25 passages in all (*cf.* *TDOT* 1:277; *e.g.*, Ex. 6:7; Lev. 26:12; Deut. 26:17-19; Jer. 11:4; Ezek. 11:20).

This theological background may have been uppermost in the minds of Paul's opponents. It stressed that Yahweh was the God peculiar to Israel. As a result, his opponents "cannot have aspired to gain adherents beyond the circle of fellow-Jews, for if the promise was valid only for the children of Abraham, what could pagans hope to obtain by the adoption of Jewish customs" (Schürer 1986: 159). In other words, the Jews thought that God would justify only on the basis of obedience to the works of the law. Justification, therefore, had to be confined to the Jews.

(2) Paul rejects this conviction and maintains that Ἰουδαίων ὁ θεὸς μόνον; οὐχὶ καὶ ἔθνῶν; ναὶ καὶ ἔθνῶν. He maintains that Israel's Lord is the creator and Lord of all. The assertion that God is the creator is, of course, not peculiar to Paul. It was also a Jewish conviction, developed during the Exile. The implications of the doctrine, however, are different for Paul and the Jews. The Jews believed that since their God was also the Lord of the Gentiles, the Gentiles would come to worship him in the Jewish way, *i.e.*, by means of observance of the law.<sup>65</sup> Paul, however, insists that because God is the creator of all, so he would δικαιώσει περιτομὴν ἐκ πίστεως καὶ ἀκροβυστίαν διὰ τῆς πίστεως. In other words, Paul regards God as the creator of the universe, but rejects the insistence that God always acts on Israel's behalf only. Therefore, he says that εἰς ὁ θεὸς ὃς δικαιώσει περιτομὴν ἐκ πίστεως καὶ ἀκροβυστίαν διὰ τῆς

πίστεως. He thereby stresses that God is the one "who has a claim to all and who encounters all, not just as Creator, but also as he who establishes salvation" (Käsemann 1980: 104). Paul maintains that God is in fact "the God of all, and will therefore justify by faith" (Barrett 1991: 79).

The idea, εἷς ὁ θεός, is probably taken from the Jewish Shema, Κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν, Κύριος εἷς ἐστὶ (Deut. 6:4). This was originally "a confession set in opposition to the temptations of the Canaanite cult of Baal" and also "a confession of the oneness of Yahweh in face of the multiplicity of divergent traditions and sanctuaries of Yahweh" (von Rad 1966: 63). Paul, however, re-interprets it, arguing that since God is the creator of both Jew and Gentile, he will therefore justify all alike, that is, by faith in Christ.<sup>66</sup>

To sum up: in Rom. 3:28-30, Paul proposes a "universal soteriology", setting faith in Christ as the universal ground for both Jews and Gentiles to become members of the community of God's people. Paul's opponents probably insist on "membership legalism" and claim that Gentiles can become members of God's people only by practising Jewish law. This is because they regard the creator of the world always to work in Israel's favour. Paul, however, rejects this idea, but skillfully uses it against them, maintaining that since God is the creator of the world, he intends to work not only on behalf of the Jews, but also on behalf of and in favour of the Gentiles. As a result, the way to become a member of God's people is not confined to the Jewish way. Faith in Christ, rather, is the universal way for *all*, Jew and Gentile.

## The Reasons

Paul is consistent as regards faith and very flexible regarding the law when faced with a mixed congregation of Jews and Gentiles. There are two fundamental reasons. The first is that Paul understands Jesus' crucifixion as χάρις, ἀπολυτρώσις and ἱλαστήριον, having the functions of deliverance, revelation and expiation, that is, the major functions of the temple and the law. As a result, faith in Jesus replaces both of these (see [2.2.2] on Rom. 3:24f.). Secondly, Paul has come to know that Gentiles who have not been circumcised can experience the gift of the Spirit. This suggests that in the Messianic age, Gentiles can become members of God's people without circumcision (see [3.2.2] on Gal. 3:1-5). This is because Paul considers the law to have been replaced, or at least fulfilled, by Jesus' death and resurrection and confirmed by the experience of the Spirit. Consequently, Paul regards the law as having nothing to do with salvation and employs very flexible tactics to suit different situations.

In addition to these two reasons above, the other reasons are: (1) that, in practice, Paul regards his tactics as missionary tactics designed to win (κερδαίνειν) more converts (1 Cor. 9:19-23) and (2) that, in terms of theology, he considers Jewish ritual laws (e.g. circumcision) along with other matters of social status (e.g., marriage) to have nothing to do with salvation. What is important for salvation is the κλήσις θεοῦ (1 Cor. 7:17-24).

#### 4.2.1 Missionary Reasons (1 Cor. 9:19-23)

In 1 Cor. 9:19-23, Paul sums up his missionary tactics in a mixed community<sup>67</sup> with the phrase τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα (v. 22b). Here τοῖς πᾶσιν probably refers to all groups and examples previously given (cf. Barrett 1971: 215). Therefore, this statement can be precisely understood as reflecting what Paul has said in vv. 20f.: ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαῖος and τοῖς ἀνόμοις ὡς ἄνομος (cf. Chadwick 1954-5: 268).<sup>68</sup> According to the context of 1 Cor. 8-10, the specific conduct Paul is talking about here is the eating of εἰδωλόθυτα. Fee is right to argue that Paul's policy on the issue is a policy "depending on the situation" (1987: 425; cf. Richardson 1980: 347), i.e., it is acceptable to eat εἰδωλόθυτα, but if this will offend someone else's conscience, it should be given up (cf. Richardson 1980: 347; Tomson 1990: 276).

Conzelmann claims that this tactic has "an opportunistic sound, as if it were determined by tactical considerations" (1975: 159; cf. Richardson 1980: 347). Fee, however, seems to be right to maintain that Paul is "intransigent on matters that affect the gospel itself", but he becomes "all things to all people in matters that don't count" (1987: 431). Paul, here, is seeking to impress upon a mixed congregation that everyone must respond to the gospel in his own way by becoming τοῖς πᾶσιν πάντα. Thus he classifies the observance of food laws as an optional response to the gospel and not as a matter which is essential to salvation.

Paul points out that the reason why he can say, τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα is διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (v. 23a).<sup>69</sup> Fee claims that διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον means "for the sake of *the progress* of the gospel" (1987: 432, his italics). It is, therefore, fair to suggest that the main reason for Paul's accommodation is a *missionary* purpose. More strikingly, in vv. 19-22a Paul repeatedly uses κερδαίνω to indicate why he adjusts his conduct to suit the circumstance.<sup>70</sup> Many scholars, following Daube<sup>71</sup>, point out that κερδαίνω is originally "a rabbinic missionary

term" (Conzelmann 1975: 160, fn. 17; cf. Barrett 1971: 211; Schlier *TDNT* 3: 673), which reflects the practice of Jewish missionaries who are willing to "make the law no more offensive and burdensome than necessary" (Barrett 1971: 211).<sup>72</sup> In Paul's usage, κερδαίνω probably simply means "to make a Christian" (Schlier *TDNT* 3: 673) by means of an appropriate tactic.<sup>73</sup>

Κερδαίνω is interchangeable with σώζω in v. 22 (cf. Schlier *TDNT* 3: 673; Fee 1987: 426f., fn. 24; Conzelmann 1975: 160, fn. 17; Barrett 1971: 216; Daube 1956: 354). Σώζω means bringing someone to "conscious participation in Christian faith and life" (Barrett 1971: 167 on 1 Cor. 7:16). It has also the force of "eschatological salvation for the perishing through Christ's death and resurrection" (Fee 1987: 431). In short, κερδαίνω and σώζω in the present passage mean *to convert a person to be a Christian by a proper missionary tactic in order that he may share the eschatological deliverance.*

To sum up, in 1 Cor. 9:19-23 Paul describes his tactics as regards Jewish law, particularly the food laws when he is with a mixed congregation. He sums up these tactics with the phrase τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα and explains that the purpose of his policy is διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, i.e., to win, or gain (κερδαίνειν) more people for Jesus and the Christian movement. This confirms that Paul is concerned to use a *missionary* tactic in a mixed congregation, allowing Jews and Gentiles to respond to the gospel in their own way. Paul not only advocates this policy, but also himself practises it.

#### 4.2.2 Theological Reasons (1 Cor. 7:17-24)

In 1 Cor. 7:17-24, Paul confirms his missionary tactic in a mixed congregation of Jews and Gentiles: περιτετμημένος τις ἐκλήθη, μὴ ἐπισπάσθω· ἐν ἁκροβυστίᾳ κέκληται τις, μὴ περιτεμνέσθω. (v. 18). He then gives the reason



for his tactics: only κλησις θεοῦ is integral to salvation, circumcision is not. In other words, κλησις θεοῦ is the condition of salvation. On the other hand, circumcision and uncircumcision have to do with social status, which has nothing to do with salvation. As a result, both Jews and Gentiles should "live out their Christian life in any of the various options" (Fee 1987: 311).

The main theme of 1 Cor. 7:17-24 is to "remain in the place you were at the time of your call" (Fee 1987: 268; cf. Bruce 1971: 71; Barrett 1971: 168).<sup>74</sup> This possibly reflects a situation in which most of the Corinthians were looking for a change in social status and in marital status in particular.<sup>75</sup> Paul obviously disagrees with this desire. He, therefore, requires them to remain in the same situation in which they found themselves. In order to persuade the Corinthians, Paul uses three illustrations in 1 Cor. 7: marriage (vv. 1-16, 25-40), circumcision (vv. 17-19) and slavery (vv. 20-24).

Paul sums up his argument in v. 17a: Εἰ μὴ ἐκάστῳ ὡς ἐμέρισεν ὁ κύριος, ἕκαστον ὡς κέκληκεν ὁ θεός, οὕτως περιπατεῖτω.<sup>76</sup> Conzelmann explains this verse by connecting it with v. 7 (... ἀλλὰ ἕκαστος ἴδιον ἔχει χάρισμα ἐκ θεοῦ, ὁ μὲν οὕτως, ὁ δὲ οὕτως) which suggests that everyone has his own peculiar gift and, therefore, there is "no such thing as 'the' Christian way of behaving, but only each man's particular way in his particular place" (1975: 118). As a result, Conzelmann says that "the call comes to me just as I am" (1975: 126). In other words, no one can do anything to attain salvation. Consequently, a change in social status cannot bring about one's salvation. Change is simply not necessary (cf. *ibid.*; Fee 1987: 309, 311).

The verb καλέω and the noun κλησις are the key words in the present passage. Κλησις is a "verbal noun" (ending -σις; cf. Schmidt TDNT 3: 493), so it has the same meaning as the verb καλέω. In the Old Testament, God is often regarded as the subject of καλέω (e.g., Isa. 42:6: "I am the Lord, I have called you ..."). The purpose of God's call is deliverance.<sup>77</sup>

In the New Testament, καλέω is a technical term for "the process of salvation"

(Schmidt *TDNT* 3: 489). "God calls, in Christ" is the normal form, which means that God chooses people for salvation (*cf.* BAGD: 399 *s.v.* καλέω 2; 1 Pt. 5:10a: Ὁ δὲ θεὸς πάσης χάριτος, ὁ καλέσας ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον αὐτοῦ δόξαν ἐν Χριστῷ [Ἰησοῦ]). Paul also uses this form (1 Cor. 1:9: ... ἐκλήθητε εἰς κοινωνίαν τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν) where it is used in the sense of God's calling people "to the blessings of salvation" (Schmidt *TDNT* 3: 488; Rom. 8:30: ... καὶ οὕτως ἐκάλεσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδικαίωσεν ...). In 1 Cor. 7:17, Paul, again, emphasizes that it is God (and the Lord) who calls the People (ὡς κέκληκεν ὁ θεός and ὡς ἐμέρισεν ὁ κύριος). Paul does not mention the purpose of God's call here, which is undoubtedly salvation (Rom. 8:30). In 1 Cor. 7:18 call and circumcision occur together. Most Jews would acknowledge that circumcision is the sign of the covenant, the sign that those who are God's allies are also his beneficiaries, that is, they are saved. It is, therefore, very likely that, in v. 17, the phrase should be read as follows: God calls people to *salvation*.

What Paul has in mind in mentioning κλήσις θεοῦ is well illustrated from 1 Cor. 1:9: πιστὸς ὁ θεός, δι' οὗ ἐκλήθητε εἰς κοινωνίαν τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν. Barrett claims that κοινωνία means "not only personal association but suggests also sharing in or sharing with, and can mean community" (1971: 39f.). Therefore, the church of Christ is established upon this call (*cf.* 1971: 40). Conzelmann emphasizes that the force of fellowship with Christ here is "belonging to the Lord until his parousia" (1975: 29). Fee maintains that here is a "soteriological use of call" and that this language indicates not only a position but also a relation, *i.e.*, of fellowship with Christ and therefore of having the privilege of communicating with Christ (*cf.* 1987: 45). Κλήσις θεοῦ is, then, God's call into fellowship with Christ which leads to eschatological deliverance.

In somewhat more down-to-earth terms, Fee defines κλήσις θεοῦ as "Christian conversion" (1987: 309). Fee further explains the relationship between κλήσις θεοῦ and the social setting, including circumcision. He says that κλήσις θεοῦ comes "to a person in a given social setting" which "renders the settings themselves

irrelevant" (*ibid.*). As a result, change is not necessary, because "one may live out the Christian life in whatever setting that call took place" (*ibid.*). On the other hand, if change does take place, that, too, does not matter, because change is also irrelevant. What is important is "not to seek change as though it had religious significance, which it does not" (*ibid.*). For Paul, κλήσις θεοῦ stands as the condition of salvation. Circumcision belongs to the social setting which has nothing to do with salvation. Therefore, for this purpose such a change is irrelevant.

In vv. 18-19 (περιτετμημένος τις ἐκλήθη, μὴ ἐπισπάσθω· ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ κέκληται τις, μὴ περιτεμνέσθω· ἡ περιτομή οὐδὲν ἐστὶν καὶ ἡ ἀκροβυστία οὐδὲν ἐστὶν, ἀλλὰ τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ) Paul urges Jews not to remove the marks of circumcision, a remark which does not necessarily reflect the fact that some Hellenized Jews tried to do so.<sup>78</sup> It is very likely that the force of this statement is simply an illustration of the principle of v. 17 (*cf.* Fee 1987: 312). Paul also asks Gentiles not to be circumcised, as some sects of Jews required.

While the Jews might regard circumcision as something which had the highest religious significance, Paul regards it only as a symbol of social status. To be circumcised only means that one is a Jew. To be a Jew has nothing to do with salvation (*cf.* Fee 1987: 313). Therefore, it is not necessary for uncircumcised Gentiles to be circumcised. What is essential for salvation is God's call in Christ. On the other hand, circumcision is the symbol of Jewishness. Accordingly, a Jewish Christian may continue "to be a Jew, with his own appointed way of obedience" (Barrett 1971: 168), *i.e.*, he may remain circumcised.

To sum up, in the present passage, Paul regards God's call as God's saving action in Christ. As a result, he emphasizes that only God's call is essential for salvation and that circumcision is only a symbol of Jewish social status. God's call has already made social status irrelevant. Therefore, being circumcised or not has nothing to do with salvation. Therefore, neither the change from circumcision to uncircumcision nor from uncircumcision to circumcision are necessary. Jews may observe the law, while Gentiles need not.

In short, (1) Paul's missionary tactic as regards circumcision in a mixed community of both Jews and Gentiles is that each can choose his own way of replying to God's saving grace; (2) the reason for this dual tactic is that Paul classifies κλησις θεοῦ as the condition of salvation, but that he classifies circumcision as a matter of Jewish social status only.

## NOTES

### (Chapter Four)

[1]. Antioch on the Orontes was a Syrian city on the southwestern corner of the Amuk plain, at the foot of Mt. Silpius and on the Orontes River, about 300 miles north of Jerusalem and 20 miles east of the Mediterranean Sea. It was founded by Seleucus I Nicator about 300 B.C. (modern Antakya in Turkey; cf. Downey *IDB* 1: 145; *idem* 1961: 15; Longenecker 1990: 65, 70; Brown and Meier 1983: 30f.). Antioch was a political, military and commercial centre "between Rome and the Persian frontier and between Palestine and Asia Minor" (Meeks 1983: 10; cf. Koester 1982: 1.69) and gradually became an important centre of Hellenization (cf. Koester 1982: 1.70). Downey describes the situation at Antioch under the Seleucid dynasty as follows:

"As the capital of the Seleucid dynasty in Syria, Antioch soon attained a political importance and a high degree of commercial prosperity which made it a wealthy and sophisticated metropolis in which Greek civilization flourished and came into close contact with oriental cultural and religious ideas" (*IDB* 1: 145; cf. *idem* 1963: 120).

When Pompey conquered the Seleucid dynasty in 64 B.C., Antioch became the capital and the military headquarters of the Roman province of Syria. After Rome and Alexandria, Antioch on the Orontes was, in the first century, the third largest city of the Roman Empire. Its population was over 500,000 (cf. Haenchen 1971: 365; Longenecker 1990: 65; Hengel 1979: 99).

Longenecker indicates that in the first century of Roman dominion, the Jewish population in Antioch was "around 65,000 or about one-seventh of the city's entire population (1990: 68; cf. Kraeling 1932: 136: 45,000; Meeks and Wilken 1972: 40f.: 22,000). He also claims that with the exception of "some mercenaries discharged from the Roman army and a few merchants", very few Jews were Roman citizens, because becoming a Roman citizen required "sacrificing their Jewish religious and national identity" (1990: 68). Although there might not have been real legal equality between the Jews and their Gentile neighbours in Antioch, there were "no strong antagonistic feelings on the part of Greeks and Romans against the Jews at Antioch during the first century", because of the Roman policy of toleration (1990: 69). Normally, the Jews "were cooperative with their Gentile neighbors and willing to compromise with the Roman authorities" (*ibid.*). Meeks maintains that during the two Palestinian revolts of A.D. 66-70 and 132-135 respectively, the Jews in Antioch did not offer support to the revolutionaries and therefore suffered no consequences of the latter's defeat (1983: 38).

[2]. According to Acts 6:1, the "Seven" were elected to take care of the poor among "the Hellenists". Apart from Acts 6:1-6, however, the "Seven" are more likely to have been the leading group of an independent community, the "Hellenists", while the "Twelve" and James were the leaders of the "Hebrews" (cf. Hengel 1983a: 13; Dunn 1990: 270; Lüdemann 1989: 77; Räisänen 1986: 242).

Οἱ Ἑλληνισταὶ were those Jews who spoke only Greek, who were normally resident outside Palestine and only temporarily living in Jerusalem, or, who, having been brought up overseas, had been affected by Gentile customs, culture and religion even though they now lived permanently in Jerusalem. On the other hand, οἱ Ἑβραῖοι were those Jews who spoke Aramaic as their mother tongue, although they probably knew Greek as well. Either their geographical origins were in Palestine, or they were Diaspora Jews who had special connections with Palestine in terms of language, life-style and faith. They were therefore not influenced by Hellenism (cf. Hengel 1983a: 9f.; Gutbrod *TDNT* 3: 388-391; BAGD: 213, 252 s.v.

Ἑβραῖος, Ἑλληνιστῆς respectively; Conzelmann 1987: 45; Neil 1973: 102; Bruce 1990: 181; Haenchen 1971: 260f., 267; Lüdemann 1989: 78).

[3]. Hengel points out that οἱ Ἑλληνισταί were Greek-speaking Jews who returned from the Diaspora and settled in Jerusalem. They might have had language problems in communicating with οἱ Ἑβραῖοι. As a result, οἱ Ἑλληνισταί had to form their own community and continued to use Greek as the language of the liturgy (cf. 1979: 74; 1983a: 14; 1983b: 55; Fredricksen 1991: 556). This separation would have provoked tension and hostility between οἱ Ἑλληνισταί and οἱ Ἑβραῖοι.

[4]. For example, Acts 2:46; 3:1. According to Luke, Peter was still observing the food laws before he saw the vision and met with Cornelius (Acts 10:13f.; cf. Dunn 1990: 237ff.).

[5]. Hengel claims that the reality of Jerusalem, however, was a disappointment to οἱ Ἑλληνισταί. He describes the situation in Jerusalem as follows:

"in the temple the Sadducean priestly nobility were exploiting the pious visitors; as the predominant spiritual movement in Palestine, Phariseism, with its subtle casuistry and its esoteric arrogance, was not especially attractive either" (1983b: 57).

[6]. Luke reports Peter's conversion of Cornelius in chs. 10-11. This is possibly a Lukan construction designed to avoid the impression that the Gentile mission was begun by οἱ Ἑλληνισταί. It also traces the origin of Gentile mission back to the Jerusalem apostles (cf. Meeks and Wilken 1979: 14; Brown and Meier 1983: 33, fn. 78; Haenchen 1971: 355-363). Conzelmann claims that the polemical verse, 11:20, however, is pre-Lukan (1987: 87). Meeks and Wilken indicate that there is indeed a tradition which connects the origin of the Gentile mission with Antioch (1979: 14). Consequently, 11:20 is possibly right in its assertion that the Gentile mission was begun by οἱ Ἑλληνισταί from Antioch.

[7]. Χριστιανόι is a proper name, meaning "Christ-people" (Haenchen 1971: 368, fn. 3), or "followers or supporters of Christ" (Brown and Meier 1983: 35, fn. 81). Bickermann understands χρηματίζειν as reflexive and claims that Χριστιανόι is the self-designation of Christians (cf. 1949: 109-124). Haenchen and Conzelmann both challenge this interpretation (cf. Haenchen 1971: 368, fn. 3; Conzelmann 1987: 88), because χρηματίζειν can also have a passive meaning: "be named" (cf. also BAGD: 885 s.v. 2). Χριστιανός is, therefore, more likely a name given by someone outside the Christian community (cf. Conzelmann 1973: 65). Downey claims that Χριστιανός was the term adopted by the Roman authorities as an official description to distinguish Christianity from Judaism (cf. 1961: 275). Χριστιανός probably was indeed given by outsiders, perhaps by the Roman authorities, because outsiders recognized that the Antioch church was big enough and distinct enough to be treated not as a sect within Judaism, but rather as an independent group. The most essential difference was that in Christianity, Gentiles were accepted as full members without circumcision or strict observance of Jewish law (cf. Brown and Meier 1983: 35, fn. 81; Haenchen 1971: 368f., fn. 3; Meeks and Wilken 1978: 15f.).

[8]. Betz notes that ὅτε is indeterminate and that there is no good reason to reverse the order (cf. 1979: 105, fn. 436). Dunn dates the episode in the late 40s of the first century (1990b: 130), since ὅτι δέ in Gal. 2:11 indicates a short interval. The episode probably happened few months after the Jerusalem council (1990b: 163f., fn. 6). Achtemeier maintains that the Apostolic Decree was the "cause" of the Antioch episode (cf. 1986: 24).



[9]. Lüdemann claims that "Paul could have abandoned the chronological order of the *narratio* (sc. Gal. 1:12-2:14) in his presentation of the controversy in Antioch" and that "this event may have been *the* occasion for the conference" (1984: 58). Longenecker suggests that "the Antioch episode most likely took place *after* Paul and Barnabas returned to Syrian Antioch from their mission to Cyprus and southern Galatia as recorded by Luke in Acts 13:4-14:25, *during* the time when 'they stayed there [at Antioch] a long time with the disciples' as recounted in Acts 14:26-28, and *before* the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15:1-29" (1990: 71, his italics). The reason is that the postpositive  $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$  signals a contrast between 2:7-10 and 2:11-14, and continues the narrative of Paul's independence from the Jerusalem apostles (cf. *ibid.*). Conzelmann argues that the Antioch episode is "a possible negative effect of the council: that the existing mixed communities are divided, since the Jewish Christians now are brought back under the law again" (1973: 89).

[10]. Although Longenecker maintains that  $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$  in Gal. 2:11 functions "both as a mild adversative and as a continuative particle" (1990: 71), it may also either emphasize a contrast, or be used as a transitional particle, without any contrast intended (cf. BAGD: 171, s.v.). Lüdemann claims that the Antioch episode was the "occasion" for the Jerusalem conference (cf. 1984: 58). The opposite is probably true. If the Antioch episode preceded the Jerusalem conference, it is difficult to explain: (1) how Paul and Barnabas could together fight against the Pharisees (Acts 15:2) after Paul had broken with Peter and Barnabas (Gal. 2:13) and (2) how Peter could defend the Gentiles (Acts 15:7-11) after he had withdrawn from the table fellowship with them (Gal. 2:12).

[11]. Sanders identifies four possibilities as regards the nature of the conflict over table fellowship:

- "(1) The food had not been tithed.
- (2) The food or the Gentiles were impure by a strict (Pharisaic) standard.
- (3) The food was abominable in Jewish eyes: either 'meat offered to idols,' meat with blood in it, or meat from forbidden creatures (such as swine, shellfish, vultures, tigers, weasels, and mosquitos: Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14).
- (4) Jews would not eat with Gentiles" (1990a: 171).

Sanders himself prefers the last possibility (cf. 1990a: 172).

As regards what happened at Antioch, Sanders maintains that:

- (1) The laws of tithing and offerings were not the problem.
- (2) The ritual purity of participants at table fellowship was not the difficulty.
- (3) The Antioch Jews were not under pressure from the Pharisees to raise purity standards. (cf. 1990a: 185).

Sanders claims that the point at issue in the Antioch episode was very possibly that the "men from James" were worried that too much association with Gentiles would "lead to contact with idolatry or transgression of one of the biblical food laws" and that "some people had a *general* reluctance to eat *any* Gentile food" (1990a: 186, his italics).

[12]. Burton points out that "he [sc. Peter] thereby exposed himself to the liability of eating food forbidden by the O.T. law of clean and unclean foods (Lev. chap. 11), and thus in effect declared it not binding upon him" (1921: 104). Betz claims that "eating with Gentile Christians implies the crossing of the line drawn by the Torah covenant" (1979: 106) and that the men from James criticize Peter's action as violating the Torah (cf. 1979: 108). Longenecker and Bruce both connect Peter's eating with Gentiles with Acts 10:9-23 in which Peter is asked to eat something unclean (cf. 1990: 73; Bruce 1982: 129). Fung suggests that "by eating freely with the Gentiles Peter on his part was in effect declaring the Christian Jew as well as

the Christian Gentile to be free from the law" (1988: 107). Dunn maintains that "the table-fellowship at Antioch had not totally disregarded the law but probably had paid due heed to the basic dietary laws of the Torah" (1990b: 158). Taylor notes that "the food consumed did not meet the requirements of the Law" (1992: 131). Taylor provides an interesting reason to explain why the food on the table was not kosher. He says that "we can be certain that food bought in the Jewish markets in Antioch would have been more *expensive* than food not subject to the specific requirements of the Law" (1992: 126, my italics).

Howard, however, believes that "the food was considered to be according to Jewish standards" (1990: xx). This suggestion may be supported by Sanders' argument. Sanders suggests that "pagans could be required to make available food which Jews would eat" (1990: 279).

[13]. Sumney maintains that "the only valid sources [sc. for identifying Paul's opponents] are roughly contemporary materials" and that "letters must be interpreted individually" (1990: 188). Therefore, "the individual letter itself is the only acceptable source of information about its opponents" (1990: 117). Although what Sumney is talking about is the method of identifying Paul's opponents, this principle can be employed to discover the precise circumstance in which Paul is arguing. According to Sumney's principle, Galatians itself is the most reliable material for reconstructing the context in Galatia and Gal. 2:11-18, in particular, is the most important source. According to the context of Gal. 2:11-14, or even the whole of Gal., food laws are not the main point at issue. Therefore, to suggest that food *as such* is the problem finds no support within the context.

[14]. For example, when food *as such* is the problem in the Roman church, Paul says that οὐδὲν κοινὸν δι' ἑαυτοῦ (Rom. 14:14) and that καλὸν τὸ μὴ φαγεῖν κρέα μηδὲ πιεῖν οἶνον (14:21). Again, when idolatry and adultery are his main concern in 1 Cor., Paul mentions ἐν εἰδωλείῳ κατακείμενον (8:10) and uses πορνεία in 10:8, εἰδωλολατρία in 10:14. It is, therefore, fair to say that the reason why Paul does not mention the problem of food *as such* is that food is not the main point at issue.

[15]. Räisänen points out that by saying εἰ περιτομὴν ἔτι κηρύσσω, τί ἔτι διώκομαι what Paul means is that neglect of circumcision is the main reason why he is being persecuted. This implies that "admission of Gentile converts without circumcision" is the main issue in the debate between Paul and his opponents in Galatia (cf. 1987a: 406f.). Moreover, the gospel accepted by the "pillars" (Gal. 2:6) very likely reflects the case of uncircumcised Titus (2:3). This indicates that Paul's gospel to the Gentiles (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας) is a "gospel that does not require *circumcision* of Gentile converts" (1987a: 407, his italics). Finally Räisänen concludes that "the main issue at stake in Galatia was circumcision" (*ibid.*).

[16]. Marcus claims that περιτομή is better understood as referring to the "circumcised penis (glans)" rather than to the "state of being circumcised" (1989: 75). Both περιτομή and ἀκροβυστία are "derogatory terms" which indicate the existence of a "dividing wall of hostility" (1989: 77f.). "It is the opposite party, the Gentiles, who term the Jews 'the circumcised penis'" (1989: 78). "Perhaps περιτομή began as the *slogan* of the Law-observant Jewish Christians, then became a term of abuse for them on the part of Gentile Christians, and finally was reclaimed by the Jewish Christians as a self-designation" (1989: 80, fn. 3). In short, Paul's use of περιτομή and ἀκροβυστία instead of Ἰουδαῖοι and ἔθνη shows his hostile attitude to those Jews who wish to circumcise Gentiles.

[17]. Richardson maintains that "in Antioch the problem is over circumcision", and that the main point at issue there is the question of "table fellowship with those not

circumcised" (1980: 351). Esler claims that the problem in both Antioch and Galatia is "the pressure on their members to be circumcised and to adopt the Jewish law" (1987: 88). Barclay indicates that Paul's opponents "wanted the Galatians to be circumcised and to observe at least some of the rest of the law, including its calendrical requirements" (1987: 88). Howard points out that "the troublemakers in Galatia insisted that Gentile Christians accept circumcision and perhaps other Mosaic prescriptions in order to be properly included among the saved" (1990: xiv). Taylor, on the other hand, thinks that food *as such* is the point at issue in the Antioch episode. He also says that "Esler is *alone* among recent scholars in arguing that the visits effectively demanded circumcision of Gentile Christians" (1992: 129, my italics). Esler, however, is not alone. Richardson, Barclay and Howard, at least, hold the same conviction.

[18]. "Reading through the lines" here implies the technique called "mirror-reading" which is used to reconstruct what Paul's opponents are saying. Barclay says that "Paul is not directly addressing the opponents in Galatians, but he is talking to the Galatians about the opponents", therefore, "we must use the text which answers the opponents as a *mirror* in which we can see reflected the people and the arguments under attack" (1987: 73f.). "Mirror-reading" is "the attempt to understand the position of the opponents by reversing Paul's defensive statements" (Howard 1990: xiii). It is a way of reading through the lines.

[19]. Both Dunn and Lategan confirm Longenecker's suggestion. Dunn indicates that the main question existing in the earliest churches, including the Antioch church, is "what requirements were necessary for Gentiles" to join the Christian community which originally consisted of mainly Jewish Christians (cf. 1990b: 131). Dunn also points out that:

"the church at Antioch could not make this decision by themselves, and readily referred it to Jerusalem. And when subsequently the delegation came from James, the majority of believers in Antioch just as readily accepted the authority of this [*sc.* the delegation from Jerusalem] further ruling regarding the practice of table-fellowship at Antioch" (1990b: 133).

Lategan claims that in the earliest churches, Gentile Christians need "practical advice to guide their day to day life" in a non-Christian environment, but that unfortunately, Paul did not provide enough practical guidance for Gentile Christians. As a result, many Gentile Christians adopted Jewish law as their practical guide (cf. 1989: 9).

[20]. Hengel claims that:

"His [*sc.* James'] rise was helped by his blood relationship with Jesus, his exemplary observance of the Torah which earned him the title 'the just', and certainly by the particular force of his character. It was probably not least his personal attraction and his fidelity to the law which made possible the continued existence of the Jerusalem community in what was becoming an increasingly difficult situation. He seems to have achieved a fruitful and peaceful relationship above all with Pharisaic circles, whereas the attitude of the Sadducean priestly nobility towards the Jewish Christians always remained a negative one. One reason for this may have been the fact that the family of Jesus himself had always been close to the atmosphere of Pharisaic piety" (1979: 95).

[21]. Paul says that Peter withdrew from table fellowship after the "men from James" came to Antioch, because he feared οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς. It is, therefore, likely that the "men from James" and οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς were the same people. The οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς of Acts 11:2f. may also be the same people as the group mentioned in Acts 15:1 (cf. Bruce 1990: 267). Luke identifies them as τινες τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς αἰρέσεως τῶν Φαρισαίων πεπιστευκότες in Acts 15:5 (cf. Mceleney



1974: 335; Neil 1973: 142). Therefore, it is very likely that the "men from James" in the Antioch episode belonged to "the sect of the Pharisees", or at least, were very close to the Pharisees.

[22]. The Pharisees were the most important and powerful group in Jewish social and religious life (cf. Dunn 1990c: 65ff.; Mason 1990: 379f.). When Josephus mentions the three main sects of the Jews, he always lists the Pharisees first, then the Sadducees and the Essenes afterwards (cf. Jos. *Ant.* 13:171). The Pharisees were well known as those who had great zeal in both political and religious affairs (cf. Jos. *Wars* 1:107-110; 2:411; Neusner 1990: 175).

Lohse claims that when proper worship in the Temple was restored, however, the Pharisees separated themselves from the Hasmoneans. From this time onward, the Pharisees gave up their efforts to change political circumstances by violence and separated themselves to wait for renewal by God by means of "pious living, prayer, and fasting" (1976: 77f.). Their name, Pharisees, probably reflects this self imposed separation; they were the "separated ones" (1976: 77; cf. Jeremias 1969: 246; Schürer 1979: 396), separate from all that is unclean (cf. Schürer 1979: 396).

The distinctive characteristics of the Pharisees are that they were "those who interpreted the law with scrupulous exactness and strictness in detail" (Dunn 1990c: 67; cf. Jos. *Wars* 2:162). They observed the rules of cultic purity even in daily life outside the temple (cf. Jeremias 1969: 257; Lohse 1976: 78) and did their best to observe the law exactly, even to practise additional pious achievements (cf. Lohse 1976: 82). As a result, they not only observed the written law, but also τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων (Mk. 7:3), those regulations handed down "by word of mouth and incorporated into the written tradition" (Lohse 1976: 81). Sanders claims that these non-biblical interpretative traditions, e.g., "the words of the scribes" and the halakah, which constituted the oral law were, however, lower in importance, in rank, in status, than the words of the Torah (cf. 1990: 129).

Of all the Jewish laws, those which concerned the Pharisees most were the dietary laws (cf. Dunn 1990c: 63; Neusner 1971: 3.303f.). Moreover, these dietary laws all focus on table fellowship, because the Pharisees attempted to maintain at table, the purity laws, which were designed for the temple (cf. Neusner 1973: 81-96). The purpose of insisting on dietary laws was to maintain the identity of the group (cf. Neusner 1981: 69f.), particularly from the Maccabean crisis onward, when the Jews were under political, racial and religious threat (cf. 1 Macc. 1:60-63). It was under this threat that circumcision and food laws became the peculiar indices of Jewish national identity. To observe these laws strictly meant to identify oneself as a member of the covenant community. As a result, "in the middle decades of the first century, Pharisees were characterized by zeal for the law and concern to practise that pattern of life which maintained the righteousness of the covenant and Israel's status as the people of God" (Dunn 1990c: 69).

In the light of this understanding, "sinners" can be understood as a technical term used by devout Jews, including the Pharisees, to describe those "who either broke the law or did not know the law" (Dunn 1990b: 150). This means that "sinners" referred to those "who did not care about Pharisaic interpretations of ritual or dietary regulations" (Fitzmyer 1981: 591; cf. Lührmann 1989: 86f.). These "sinners" included the Jews who abandoned the law, or did not observe the law properly, tax collectors for political reasons (cf. Guelich 1989: 101) and the Gentiles who by definition were outside the covenant and then outside the law (cf. Fitzmyer 1981: 591). Therefore, in many documents the term, "sinners", was used more or less as a synonym for "Gentiles" (cf. Dunn 1990c: 73f.; Lührmann 1989: 86), for example, *Jub.* 23:23f.: "And he [the Lord] will rouse up against them the sinners of the nations ... they will cry out and call and pray to be saved from the hand of the sinners, the gentiles ..."

This is the background to the Antioch episode. The "men from James" adopted a strict attitude to the law from the Pharisees, indeed, they may well have themselves been Pharisees. They insisted (1) that the Gentiles had first to be

circumcised before being accepted as church members (cf. Fredriksen 1991: 549); (2) that without circumcision the Gentiles were still sinners; and (3) that consequently the Jews had to withdraw from table fellowship with them.

[23]. The reason is (1) that the imperfect tense of *συνήσθιεν* implies repeated or habitual conduct (cf. Burton 1921: 104) prolonged for a considerable period and that consequently it is unlikely that Peter ate with the Gentiles only for the ordinary meal or the Lord's supper; and (2) that *συνεσθίω* and *ἐσθίω* is used to refer both to ordinary meals and to the Lord's supper in the Gospels and Pauline epistles. As for ordinary meals, *συνεσθίω* and *ἐσθίω* sometimes refer to Jesus' table fellowship with sinners and tax collectors (e.g., Mk. 2:16: *ὅτι μετὰ τῶν τελωνῶν καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν ἐσθίει*;) and to the associations and relationships within the community (e.g., 1 Cor. 5:11). As for the Lord's supper, *ἐσθίω* may refer to Jesus' eating with his disciples (e.g., Mk. 14:14) and to the formal Lord's supper (e.g., 1 Cor. 11:20).

[24]. Tomson claims that dietary laws have a fundamental significance both in a religious and social sense in Judaism. As regards the religious significance, Tomson employs "structural anthropology" and says that "dietary customs and table manners embody the specific human or 'rational' value system of any given culture" and that "in connecting values and beliefs to the basic acts of daily subsistence, dietary laws structure religious experience, inform ethical conduct and define corporate and individual identity" (1990: 221).

Concerning the social significance, Tomson indicates that eating together is "a basic expression of social belonging ... The highest sanction ... is excommunication i.e. exclusion from social contact" (Tomson 1990: 222). To be excluded from table fellowship means to be separated from God's blessing and from the community. In 1 Cor. 5:11, Paul prohibits church members from eating with one who is *πόρνος ἢ πλεονέκτης ἢ εἰδωλόατρος ἢ λοίδορος ἢ μέθυσορ ἢ ἄρπαξ*. This means that such men have to be "excluded from the community as it gathers for worship and instruction" (Fee 1987: 226).

Table fellowship also characterises "eschatological meals" (Jeremias 1971: 116). Hill takes Mt. 8:11 to mean that "the many from the east and west are the Gentile believers who will enjoy the Messianic banquet, which often symbolizes the joys of the future kingdom" (1972: 159).

Paul provided an important warning on the Lord's supper in 1 Cor. 11:20f. The possessive adjective *κυριακόν* means "belonging to the Lord" (Fee 1987: 539f.) or "pertaining to the Lord" (Barrett 1971: 262). This adjective *κυριακόν* is also "found in contemporary Greek in the sense of 'imperial', where the *kyrios* to which it refers is the emperor" (Bruce 1971: 109). This meal is eaten "by the gathered people of God in his presence (by the Spirit) and in his honor" (Fee 1987: 540). The Lord's supper is eaten in the assembly. This idea stands in sharp contrast to the separation in v. 21 (cf. Barrett 1971: 262; Fee 1987: 540) and also to Peter's separation in the Antioch episode. If the rich do not share their food with the poor, they do "not to eat the Lord's supper, but their own" (Barrett 1971: 263). In other words, the real significance of the Lord's supper is that the congregation meet together and share food around the Lord's table.

[25]. Sanders claims that for fear of idolatry, some Jews separated themselves from their Gentile neighbours, hence the Jewish ghetto. Outside the ghetto, however, many Jews mingled with Gentiles quite freely, but took care to avoid adultery and idolatry (cf. 1990a: 176-185).

The proselytes' status in the Jewish community is ambiguous (cf. Cohen 1989: 14f., 27; Fredriksen 1991: 546; Mceleney 1974: 328). On the one hand, "proselytes were regarded by the rabbis as of equal status with born Israelites in regard to duties and rights" (Schürer 1986: 176). They were allowed to participate in the sacred meals, to bring their legal cases before the communal authorities, to pay the

communal taxes, to sit with the Jews in the theatre and to be buried in proximity to other Jews after death (cf. Cohen 1989: 28). In view of this, eating with Gentile proselytes would have been legal for a Jew. On the other hand, the proselytes were still somewhat different from native born Jews. None of the proselytes "achieved real equality with the native born" (Cohen 1989: 29; cf. Jeremias 1969: 323). For example, according to the Mishnah, "a proselyte should not say 'Our god and god of our fathers' in his prayers, nor should he recite the Deuteronomic formula, 'from the land you have sworn unto our fathers to give us'" (Cohen 1989: 30; *m. Bik.* 1:4). Cohen explains:

"The major obstacle to their integration is the fact that we Jews see ourselves as members of an *ethnos* or tribe, a people linked by descent from a common set of ancestors. This self-definition forms the basis of the ruling of the Mishnah that converts may not say 'our fathers'" (1991: 428).

There was also among the Gentiles the "God-fearer" (φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν, or σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν). Mceleney believes that "God-fearer" applies to all three groups: (1) to Jews by birth; (2) to proselytes; and (3) to other practitioners of Judaism (cf. Mceleney 1974: 326). Most scholars, however, maintain the view that God-fearer was different from proselyte, the basic difference being circumcision. Jeremias defines God-fearers as those "who simply confessed faith in one God and observed part of the ceremonial laws, without total commitment to Judaism (1969: 320). According to Josephus, a God-fearer had to observe at least food laws, the sabbath and the festivals (cf. Fredriksen 1991: 541f.; Schürer 1986: 169; Jos. *Ap.* 2:282). Beyond these observances, "it will have been a matter of personal choice as to how much of the Law was observed" (Schürer 1986: 169).

The degree of union between God-fearer and the Jews depended on locality. Cohen indicates that in Aphrodisias, Miletus and western Asia Minor, the Jewish communities were part of the general society. This meant that in these places social intercourse between Jews and God-fearer was easier than in other places. In some communities, however, in Alexandria for example, union between Jews and God-fearers was nearly impossible (cf. 1989: 32). Dunn maintains that "there would be a broad range of social intercourse between faithful Jew and God-fearing Gentile, with strict Jews avoiding table fellowship as far as possible and those less scrupulous in matters of tithing and purity willingly extending and accepting invitations to meals where such Gentiles would be present" (1990b: 147).

Generally speaking, "the attitude of the Palestinian Jew was stricter than that of the Diaspora Jew on the question of how far a Gentile had to go to be acceptable" (Dunn 1990b: 147; cf. O'Neill 1972: 39; Str-B 3: 421f., 4: 374-378). Josephus tells us a story about a Gentile king, Izates, in *Ant.* 20:34-48, which reveals strikingly different attitudes to the necessity of circumcision for Gentiles. In the story, Ananias, the Diaspora Jew, thought that circumcision was unnecessary but that what was important for the Gentile was to worship God (20:41f.). On the other hand, Eleazer, a Jew from Palestine, insisted that circumcision was essential for a Gentile (20:44f.).

This background permits a better understanding of the Antioch episode. Let us suppose that Paul, Peter (before withdrawal from table fellowship with the Gentiles) and the other Jews in the church in Antioch took "Ananias' view": uncircumcised Gentiles were not sinners. Consequently, they ate with them. The opposite view was taken by the "men from James".

[26]. Dunn makes a similar suggestion. He says that:

"They [sc. the "men from James"] would no doubt point out that the earlier agreement made in Jerusalem had in no way changed the obligations to Torah obedience resting on the Jewish believers, and must have insisted that the Jewish believers in Antioch conduct themselves with greater discipline and greater loyalty to the Torah, more like their fellow believers in Palestine and with a similar regard for the heritage of Jewish



tradition and custom. Peter, persuaded by this charge of disloyalty and out of concern for the future of the Jewish Christian assemblies and 'the mission to the circumcised', withdrew into a more disciplined ritual and 'the rest of the Jews' followed suit" (1990b: 158).

[27]. Theissen claims that Peter was one of the travelling missionaries. His evidence is as follows: (1) When Paul visited Jerusalem (Gal. 1:18), Peter was the only disciple he found there, because the others were "travelling through the country on a mission of preaching and healing". (2) Peter was also often on journeys (e.g., Acts 8:14; cf. 1978: 9).

[28]. After Barnabas had worked in Antioch for a while, he probably went to Tarsus to invite Paul to become his assistant (Acts 11:25f.). When the Jerusalem conference was held, Barnabas and Paul were the delegates from the Antioch church (Acts 15:2).

[29]. Lohse does not think that Paul was in tension with Peter. He says that in Gal. 2:11-21,

"Paul despite this sharp controversy does not intend to displace Cephas or to diminish the importance of his ministry. On the contrary, just because he goes on having a high regard for what Peter has to do, he continues talking to him" (1991: 432).

Lohse concludes that what Paul and Peter had in common was much greater than what divided them. The task they shared was: "to preach nothing else but Jesus as Lord" (1991: 435). It is my view, however, that although Paul continued his conversation with Peter in Gal. 2:15-21, it was a conversation at the top of his voice, in other words, a "shouting match". Lohse's suggestion is at variance with the picture we get from Gal. 2:11-21.

[30]. Burton defines it as "to follow the Jewish way of life", i.e., "to observe the Jewish law" (1921: 115). Betz claims that ἰουδαῖζειν "includes more than submitting to Jewish dietary laws; it describes forcing one to become a Jewish convert obliged to keep the whole Torah" (1979: 112). Longenecker maintains that ἰουδαῖζειν means "to embrace the Jewish faith" or "to become a Jew" rather than just "to live like a Jew" (1990: 78).

[31]. Burton claims that Peter and the other Jews' separation "left to the Gentiles no choice but either to conform to the Jewish law of foods, or suffer a line of division to be drawn through the church" (1921: 112). Burton's suggestion is correct except where he says "to conform to the Jewish law of foods". Räisänen's argument is more accurate. He says that "the demand [sc. by Peter's withdrawal from table fellowship] was raised that they ought either to be circumcised or to form isolated separate congregations" (1987: 258; cf. Lohse 1991: 431).

[32]. O'Neill suggests:

"If a Jew, because of his Jewish nature, has a right to live like a Jew, has not a Gentile also the right to be allowed to live as a Gentile?" (1972: 41);

and Tomson:

"Before, you [sc. Peter] agreed to live and eat as a Jew together with the gentiles, and although some call that 'living like a gentile', why do you now separate and wish to eat with them only if they become Jews?" (1990: 230).

[33]. Tomson, on the other hand, claims:

"Paul does not urge Peter to join him again in a non-Jewish way of life. On the contrary: he urges for a Jewish life which does not force gentiles

to judaize, in line with the agreement [sc. the agreement in Gal. 2:7-9]" (1990: 230).

And O'Neill:

"Cephas is fully entitled to live like a Jew, but he has no right to compel Gentiles to abandon their own status, since the way to righteousness does not lie through the law" (1972: 41).

Two different sets of convictions on circumcision and the sabbath may be practised by a mixed community: Jews undertake circumcision, while Gentiles do not; Jews observe the sabbath, when Gentiles go to work. It is very difficult to imagine, however, how Jews could eat kosher food and Gentiles eat non-kosher food at the same table.

[34]. Forbidden by Jewish law are (1) blood (Deut. 12:15f.); (2) unclean animals (Lev. 11:4-8) and (3) εἰδωλόθυτα, because of the first commandment (cf. Dunn 1988: 827).

[35]. Vegetarianism was quite normal in the ancient world, especially in the Greek world. Cranfield points out that the adherents of Orphism rejected killing animals and eating their flesh, possibly because of belief in "metempsychosis" (cf. 1979: 693f., fn. 5). Evidence is found in Plato *Leges* 6:782c (... ἀλλὰ Ὀρφικοί τινες λεγόμενοι βίοι ἐγίγνοντο ἡμῶν τοῖς τότε, ἀψύχων μὲν ἐχόμενοι πάντων, ἐμψύχων δὲ τοῦναντίον πάντων ἀπεχόμενοι). Behm (also Cranfield *ibid.*) indicates that some Jews were vegetarians (cf. *TDNT* 2: 690). E.g., *Testament of Reuben* 1:10: "repented before the Lord: I did not drink wine or liquor; meat did not enter my mouth, and I did not eat any pleasurable food. Rather, I was mourning over my sin, since it was so great ..." (*cit. OTP* 1: 782); *Testament of Judah* 15:4: "Since I repented of these acts, I consumed neither wine nor meat until my old age, and I saw no merriment at all" (*cit. OTP* 1: 799). In both cases the reason given for abstention is religious: repentance. Behm, however, also claims that religious vegetarianism was, in New Testament times, rarer in Judaism than in the Greek world, where vegetarianism is widely adopted in Orphic religion, Neo-Pythagoreanism, Neo-Platonism and the Oriental Mysteries (*TDNT* 2: 690). It is, therefore, fair to suggest that the reference to abstaining from meat and wine in Rom. 14:1-15:13 refers neither to the Jewish nor the Gentile practice of vegetarianism, but rather to abstaining from εἰδωλόθυτα and libation wine.

[36]. "The weak" could also include Gentile proselytes, while "the strong" might include Jews like Paul (Rom. 15:1: ἡμεῖς οἱ δυνατοί; cf. Ziesler 1989: 17; Dunn 1988: 802).

[37]. Cranfield (1979: 690-695) lists 6 possibilities when seeking to identify "the weak": (1) "The weak" are those legalists who think that they can earn God's favour by their observance of the law. (2) The conflict between "the weak" and "the strong" is about whether a Christian can eat εἰδωλόθυτα or not. (3) Their abstinence is a fast of sorrow for the continuing unbelief of the great majority of Jews. (4) Their abstinence is a fast to discipline the body. (5) Their abstinence, particularly their vegetarianism, is due to the influence of various religious-philosophical movements in the pagan world. (6) "The weak" refers to those who literally obey the ceremonial part of Jewish law. Cranfield himself supports the last suggestion.

[38]. Εἰδωλόθυτα refers to "sacrificial meat, part of which was burned on the altar, part was eaten at a solemn meal in the temple, and part was sold in the market" (BAGD: 221, s.v. εἰδωλόθυτος). This word is used only by Hellenistic Judaism, while the pagan uses ἱερόθυτα (cf. *ibid.*; Fee 1987: 357, fn. 1). Jews are completely forbidden to eat such food (cf. Fee 1987: 357, fn. 1; Büchsel *TDNT* 2: 378). E.g., m. *Aboda Zara*. 2:3: "Flesh that is entering in unto an idol is

permitted, but what comes forth is forbidden" (*cit.* Fee 1987: 357, fn. 1). Barrett suggests three reasons why Jews were forbidden to eat εἰδωλόθυτα: "(a) it was tainted with idolatry; (b) it could not be supposed that the heathen would have paid tithe on it; (c) if it was meat, it could not be supposed that it had been slaughtered in the proper way" (1971: 188).

[39]. Barrett claims that there were 20,000 Jews in Rome during the reign of Nero (*cf.* 1991: 237). Most scholars, however, suggest that there were about 50,000 Jews in Rome in the first century A.D. (*cf.* Leon 1960: 15; Brown and Meier 1983: 15; Lüdemann 1984: 188, fn. 68). Leon indicates that there were *in toto* about 6 or 7 million Jews in the empire, including a million in Babylon (*cf.* 1960: 135; Brown and Meier 1983: 94, fn. 193). In such matters, it is hard to be sure.

[40]. Orosius *Historiae adversum paganos* 7.6.15: "Josephus reports that the Jews were expelled from the city by Claudius in his ninth year" (ET *cit.* Lüdemann 1984: 164). The original text reads: *Anno eiusdem [scil. Claudii] nono expulsos per Claudium urbe Iudaeos Iosephus refert* (*cit.* Stern 1980: 115).

[41]. Lüdemann claims that Claudius not only prohibited the right of Jewish assembly, but also disbanded the clubs which had been reintroduced by Gaius. He says:

"the edict concerning the Jews, alongside the disbandment of the clubs ... is related to the suppression of the institution of associations and should be understood, in Dio's opinion, as a retraction of the right of association granted the Jews. This act was intended to establish control over the political intrigues that accompanied the change of power in Rome after Gaius was murdered" (1984: 165).

[42]. The reports of Acts and Suetonius on expulsion and of Dio on restriction have raised critical problems. (1) Do we have reports of one event, or of two? Or do we have the report of one event, of which there are two parts, or 'moments'? Did an edict on restriction give rise to an expulsion? Was an edict on expulsion commuted under protest into a restriction? (2) If there was one event, did it take place at the beginning of Claudius' reign, or at the end? If there were two, was there a restriction at the beginning (A.D. 41, say) and an expulsion at the end (A.D. 49)?

Schürer, Lüdemann and Stern reckon on one event, which Schürer assigns to the end and the others to the beginning of Claudius' reign. Watson opts for two events, Dio's restriction at the beginning and the expulsion of Acts and Suetonius at the end of Claudius' reign.

Schürer suggests that:

"An edict unfavourable to the Jews is not likely to belong to the earliest years of his reign for it was just then that he published an edict of tolerance in their regard. The edict referred to by Dio is therefore very likely identical with that of Suetonius" (1986: 77, fn. 91).

Lüdemann tries to reconstruct what was going on by saying that:

"In view of the literary relationship of Dio and Suetonius in other matters ... both authors drew upon a common source. Dio seems to have had access to other sources, which enabled him to add that the imperial edict occurred in the first year of Claudius's reign and which allowed him to correct the misunderstanding [of Suetonius' report] that could arise from his other source" (1984: 166).

Stern argues that:

"Possibly Claudius first intended to expel all the Jews from Rome, and even published an edict to that effect. But under pressure from the Jews, and perhaps especially from Agrippa I, to whom Claudius owed so much that year (41 C.E.), he reversed the order of expulsion and changed it

into a restriction of the Jewish right of assembly. Not a few of the Jews left Rome, perhaps before the reversal of the first order" (1980: 116). The difficulty with Stern's solution is chronological. According to Stern, expulsion was prior to the edict of restriction of assembly. The contrary, however, is more likely: the restriction of assembly (Dio's in A.D. 41) was prior to the edict of expulsion (Suetonius' in A.D. 49).

Watson is, therefore, probably right to suggest that:

"disorders among the Roman Jews because of the preaching of the Christian gospel had been going on for some time before Claudius finally lost patience and expelled them in AD 49. His decree forbidding meetings of AD 41 may therefore have been an earlier measure designed to solve the same problem" (1986: 93).

In other words, Suetonius' report is reliable. Jews, or more precisely, some Jews, were expelled from Rome less than ten years before Paul wrote Romans.

[43]. Wedderburn asserts that "it was unlikely that *all* Jews were involved in view of their numbers" (1988: 55, his italics). Jewett claims that "it was all the agitators rather than all 50,000 Jews in Rome who were banned" (1979: 37). Lüdemann maintains that only "those who participated directly in the controversy involving Chrestus had to leave the city of Rome" (1984: 170). Brown assert that it was only foreign Jews who were expelled since:

"About 4,000 Jews were conscripted for military service ... [and] since Jews who were Roman citizens could not have been expelled without a trial ... [so] only foreign Jews were involved" (Brown and Meier 1983: 94, fn. 194, his italics; cf. Leon 1960: 18f.).

Brown's evidence is taken from Jos. *Ant.* 18:83f., which, referring to another expulsion, suggests by comparison that Jews conscripted into the army would not have been expelled.

[44]. A fourth-century writer whom we know only as "Ambrosiaster" says that:

"It is established that there were Jews living in Rome in the times of the apostles, and that those Jews who had believed [in Christ] passed on to the Romans the tradition that they ought to profess Christ but keep the law (*ut Christum profitentes, legem servarent*) ... One ought not to condemn the Romans, but to praise their faith; because without seeing any signs or miracles and without seeing any of the apostles, they nevertheless accepted faith in Christ, although according to a Jewish rite" (Ambrosii *Works* 3:373, *cit.* Wedderburn 1988: 51).

[45]. This suggestion is supported by Luke. When Paul was sent to Rome as a prisoner, he called the local leaders of the Jews and defended himself. Then the local leaders replied: ἡμεῖς οὐτε γράμματα περὶ σοῦ ἐδεξάμεθα ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας οὐτε παραγενόμενός τις τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀπήγγειλεν ἢ ἐλόλυσεν τι περὶ σοῦ πονηρόν (Acts 28:21).

[46]. Wiefel claims that the disturbance reported by Suetonius is "a dispute within the Roman synagogues about the messiahship of Jesus" (1991: 93). If, however, the first Roman congregation is a "Judaizing Christianity" and if the conflict between "the weak" and "the strong" in Rom. 14:1-15:13 is about Jewish food laws, then observance of the law is probably the main point, or at least one of the main points, of dispute in the first Roman congregation.

[47]. Wiefel's evidence is Rom. 16. He claims that there are 25 names in Rom. 16, most of which are Greek in origin and 6 of which are Latin: Aquila, Junias, Ampliatus, Urbanus, Rufus and Julia (cf. 1991: 95).



[48]. Sanders claims that although the food supply in Hellenistic cities was the responsibility of the city council, meat in Rome often remained in the hands of private enterprise (cf. 1990: 277).

[49]. Although Burkert claims that in the sacrifice "no meat must be taken away: all must be consumed without remainder in the sanctuary" (1985: 57), Sanders asserts that some of the meat was sold in the market (cf. 1990: 363, fn. 25). Moreover, Sanders points out that "in classical Greece, the only animals which were offered for sale in the market were those which could be sacrificed" (1990: 278; cf. Ziesler 1989: 324, 326). Sanders agrees with Barrett's argument (1982a: 49) and says that "in most Mediterranean cities 'meat offered to idols' was more plentiful than non-sacrificial meat" (1990: 280).

Gill indicates that in Greek sacrifice, the priests received not only their own shares, but also the portions that were nominally assigned to the gods (cf. 1974: 128f.). Gill's evidence is taken from an inscription from Stratonicea in which "a priest is praised because ἀπέδωκεν πάσῃ τύχῃ τὰ ἀνελεγχθέντα τῷ θεῷ δεῖπνα καὶ τὰ ἐκ τῶν θυσιῶν γεινόμενα γέρα, i.e., he disposed of his own shares and those of the god" (1974: 129). In the light of this understanding, Bruce's statement is very likely right:

"When sacrificial animals were offered in the temples, the deity received a token portion; what the priests and temple attendants could not use themselves would be *sold to the meat market*, where it would command a ready sale among the public, because only the best animals were acceptable for temple sacrifices" (1971: 78, *my italics*).

[50]. Watson points out that Jewish abstention from meat and wine is not unusual in the Jewish tradition. Daniel and his friends refused the king's meat and wine which would defile them (Dan. 1:8-16). Judith rejected the food and wine provided by Holofernes (Jud. 12:1-4). Esther decided not to eat at Haman's table or at the king's feast (Esth. 14:17, LXX). Watson concludes that "in all these examples, Jews are in a Gentile environment, cut off from their community, in which ceremonially pure meat and wine might be obtained" (1986: 95). Watson also suggests that when Christian Jews returned to Rome after the expulsion, they possibly lived as a separated community and could not get kosher food which was only available in the Jewish community. As a result, they had to do "what Daniel, Judith, Esther ... did when in a Gentile environment: they abstained from meat and wine" (*ibid.*).

[51]. Goulder claims that some Jews observe not only "Biblical Law", but also "interpreted Law" (1991: 529). He says that "Gentile Christians could read Lev. 17:14 and maintain with perfect truth that they had seen the animal killed with a knife, and the blood run away; but this could never satisfy Jewish Christians who knew how many complications were involved before one could safely eat meat" (*ibid.*). Sanders points out that "pagans could be required to make available food which Jews could eat" (1990: 279), however, some Jews still avoided Gentile food, particularly meat, simply "because it was Gentile" (*ibid.*). As a result, the best way to eat in a pagan environment would be to eat only vegetables and drink only water.

[52]. For example, because the words ἀσθενῶν (Rom. 14:1) and δυνατοί (Rom. 15:1) also occur in 1 Cor. 1:26f., Theissen suggests that "the socially weak of [1 Cor] 1:26-27 are identical with those who are weak in the face of consecrated meat" (1982a: 125) and that "the strong" in Rom. 15:1 probably "belong to the few who are 'wise ... powerful ... and of noble birth'" in 1 Cor. 1:26 (cf. 1982a: 138). Then he suggests that:

"Members of the lower classes seldom ate meat in their everyday lives. For that they were largely dependent on public distributions of meat which were always organized around a ceremonial occasion ... As a

result, those from the lower classes knew meat almost exclusively as an ingredient in pagan religious celebrations, and the acts of eating meat and worshipping idols must have been much more closely connected for them than for members of the higher strata who were more accustomed to consuming meat routinely" (1982a: 128).

Theissen (1982a: 127f.) lists 5 opportunities when the lower classes would have had a chance to eat meat: (1) at "extraordinary events such as the celebration of a victory"; (2) at "public sacrificial meals which were instituted for particular days"; (3) at great religious feasts; (4) when ceremonial meat was provided by "the many associations whose bylaws provided for specific feasts"; (5) at "private invitations to a temple".

Theissen's suggestion indicates the fact that εἰδωλόθυτα was very popular in the ancient world. It was very difficult for poor people to avoid such food, if they wanted to eat meat. This situation may also have existed in Rome and throughout the Roman empire. It is, therefore, fair to suggest that what concerns Paul in 1 Cor. is not εἰδωλόθυτα, but rather εἰδωλολατρία, or both.

[53]. Fee notes that εἰδωλολατρία and πορνεία always come together (cf. 1980: 186; Acts 15:29; Rev. 2:14, 20; 1 Cor. 10:7f.). This connection is also found in the Old Testament and the pagan world. Num. 25:1f.: "While Israel was staying at Shittim, the people began to have *sexual relations* with the women of Moab. These invited the people to the *sacrifices of their gods*, and the people *ate and bowed down to their gods*" (my italics). Ex. 32:6: "They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings [to golden calf] and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to *eat and drink*, and rose up to *leśahēq*" (my italics). The verb, *śahēq*, can have "a decidedly sexual connotation" (Childs 1974: 556). Josephus tells us a story which happened in the temple of Isis in Rome. A woman, Paulina, after *supper* had night long *sex* with a man, Mundus, because she thought that he was the god Anubis (*Ant.* 18:74; cf. Fee 1980: 186, fn. 25).

[54]. Burkert also indicates that normally from "the first krater a libation is to be made to Zeus and the Olympians, from the second to the heroes and from the third and last to Zeus Teleios, the Finisher" (1985: 70f.). Before the libation is poured, invocation and prayer take place first: "the cup is filled in order to pray, and the filled cup is passed to the guest with the invitation to pray in turn" (1985: 71). The purpose of offering a libation is to ask the gods for help (cf. *ibid.*).

[55]. Burkert tells us this story:

"When Achilles sends Patroclus out to battle, he takes from his chest the cup from which he alone drinks, cleans it, washes his hands, and draws the wine; then, stepping into the court, he pours out the wine and, looking up to the sky, prays for the victory and safe return of his friend" (1985: 71).

[56]. Käsemann quotes Str-B 3: 308, which includes, for example *b. Sanhedrin* 65b: "R. Akiba said: It is one who calculates the times and hours, saying, Today is propitious for setting forth; tomorrow for making purchases; the wheat ripening on the eve of the seventh year is generally sound ..."; and *b. Pesahim* 112a:

"Our Rabbis taught: A man must not drink water either on the nights of the fourth days [Wednesdays] or on the nights of Sabbath, and if he does drink, his blood is on his own head, because of the danger. What is the danger? An evil spirit."

Cranfield claims that this suggestion "is surely to be rejected" (1979: 705). Dunn criticises this interpretation as well, because it is "too far from the central concerns" of Romans (1988: 806). Käsemann, in his comment on Rom. 14:1-12, points out that the main conflict in the Roman congregation, or wherever Jewish



Christians and Gentile Christians meet, is the struggle between observance of a fixed tradition of Jewish law and genuine Christian freedom from the observance of Jewish law. (cf. 1980: 368f.). It is, therefore, fair to suggest that Rom. 14:1-15:13 is about Jewish law. That is to say, the "day" in 14:5 is best understood as the sabbath or another Jewish feast day.

[57]. Longenecker (1990: 182), following Burton (1921: 233f.), suggests that *μήνας* refer to recurring monthly events (Isa. 66:23), or to the appearance of the new moon which indicates the beginning of each month (Num. 10:10). Bruce suggests that *καιρούς* refer to the great feasts of the Jewish calendar, such as Passover and that the *ἐνιαυτούς* are the sabbatical years, or the year of Jubilee, etc. (cf. 1982: 206). Burton, however, also argues that:

"μήνας is included in *ἡμέρας*, and *ἐνιαυτούς* in *καιρούς* or *ἡμέρας*, the four terms without mutual exclusiveness covering all kinds of celebrations of days and periods observed by the Jews" (1921: 234).

Paul forbids the Galatians to observe "days" in Gal. 4:10, but allows the Romans to observe them in Rom. 14:5. This is because of the flexibility of Paul's missionary tactics. In Gal. 4:10, Paul is addressing Gentile Christians (4:8), for whom Jewish law is not necessary (Gal. 4:21; 5:1f.; see [3.1.1]). In Rom. 14:5, however, Paul addresses "the weak", that is, mainly Jewish Christians, whom he consistently encourages to observe the law (see [2.1]). Accordingly, there is no contradiction between Gal. 4:10 and Rom. 14:5.

[58]. Paul's reason for writing Romans is in dispute. The Roman church was clearly not founded by Paul. Some scholars, therefore, argue that Paul knows very little about the situation in the Roman church and consequently that Romans is an *universal* letter. Bornkamm, for example, claims that Romans cannot be addressed to specific situations, groups and controversies in the Roman church, because "the congregation was not founded by Paul" (1991: 18). Karris states that "the weak" and "the strong" are not two communities in Rome and that "Romans 14:1-15:13 is better explained as general Pauline paraenesis, which is adopted and generalized especially from Paul's discussion in 1 Cor. 8-10 and is addressed to a problem that may arise in any community" (1991: 84). However, the fact that the Roman church was not founded by Paul does not necessarily mean that he knows very little about the congregation. Indeed, in Rom. 16, Paul sends his greetings to many members of the congregation. If Rom. 16 is "an integral part of Paul's original edition of Romans" (Donfried 1991: 52), Paul very likely knows a lot of Roman church members. The appearance of Prisca and Aquila in 16:3 indicates that the Roman congregation probably knew of Paul's law-free Gentile mission. It is, therefore, fair to say that Romans was written to meet the specific needs of the situation in Rome, that is, guidance as regards observance or non-observance of the law (cf. Wedderburn 1988: 140f.).

[59]. *Εἰρήνη* is equivalent to *shālôm* in the Old Testament. It is used of the well-being which is the gift of Yahweh and includes the eschatological peace which he has promised (cf. von Rad TDNT 2: 402-406). In the New Testament, *εἰρήνη* can be used of the eschatological salvation of the whole person (e.g., Lk. 2:14; cf. Foerster TDNT 2: 412f.). Paul once uses *εἰρήνη* to mean "messianic salvation" (Rom. 5:1; cf. BAGD: 227, s.v. 3) and to parallel *ζωή* (Rom. 8:6; cf. Foerster TDNT 2: 414f.). In the context of Rom. 14:1-15:13, however, *εἰρήνη* in the first instance refers to peaceful relationships with other people, whatever else may also be involved.

[60]. For Paul, human love derives from God's love. God's love is expressed in the death and resurrection of Christ (cf. Rom. 5:5f.; Stauffer TDNT 1: 49f.; Furnish 1973: 196). Because God has shown his love, we must respond by loving one another. This is also the foundation of Paul's argument in Rom. 14:1-15:13.

In 14:3, Paul asks of both groups not to attack each other, because ὁ θεὸς ... αὐτὸν προσελάβετο. In 15:7f., Paul encourages both groups to προσλαμβάνεσθαι ἀλλήλους, the reasons being that ὁ Χριστὸς προσελάβετο ὑμᾶς and that Χριστὸν διάκονον γεγενῆσθαι περιτομῆς.

In the context of Rom. 14:15, the force of ἀγάπη is interpreted by the following sentence: μὴ τῷ βρώματί σου ἐκείνον ἀπόλλυε ὑπὲρ οὗ Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν. This is the limitation on the freedom of "the strong" (cf. Furnish 1973: 111-118; Gal. 5:13f.).

To conclude, Paul recalls God's love in Christ and encourages both groups in the Roman congregation to respond to this love by loving one another, i.e., by respecting one another's convictions. Moreover, Paul requires of "the strong" to do more than "the weak", i.e., not to practise their liberty and even to obey food laws, if eating might cause the downfall of "the weak".

[61]. The verb βαστάζειν also occurs in Gal. 6:2. Burton defines βαστάζω as "a willing, helpful, sympathetic sharing of the burden" (1921: 330). Betz claims that βαστάζειν not only means "tolerate", but also includes the force of "effective assistance and relief" (1979: 299). Both emphasize the positive sense of actual help, but neither indicates how to do it. Bruce claims that "Paul is here enjoining the sharing by each member of a common financial burden" (1982: 261).

[62]. This is a surprising requirement which obviously contradicts Paul's law-free gospel to the Gentiles. The possible reasons are (1) that Paul classifies Jewish food laws as a question of life-style, but not as an essential condition for becoming God's people (see [4.2.2] on 1 Cor. 7:17-24); (2) that "the strong" form the majority group in the Roman congregation, and of them Paul asks more; (3) that, in the present passage (Rom. 14:21), Paul indicates that the liberty of "the strong" should not cause the stumbling of "the weak".

[63]. Käsemann does not agree that ἄνθρωπος without the article can refer to "mankind, eliminating the distinction between Jew and Gentile" (1980: 103). In the present context, however, Paul is talking about the equal standing of Jews and Gentiles before God (v. 29: God is of both Jews and Gentiles; v. 30: God will justify Jews and Gentiles through the same faith; cf. Sanders 1983: 33). Therefore, Cranfield seems to be right to claim that ἄνθρωπος without the article has a "universal sense" (1975: 221, fn.4).

[64]. Another example is found in Bar. 4:1-4:

"She (sc. Torah) is the book of the commandments of God,  
the law that endures forever.

All who hold her fast will live,  
and those who forsake her will die.

Turn, O Jacob, and take her;  
walk toward the shining of her light.

Do not give your glory to another,  
or your advantages to an alien people.

Happy are we, O Israel,  
for we know what is pleasing to God."

Israel was thought of as a special nation among the nations:

"He (sc. the Lord) appointed a ruler for every nation,  
but Israel is the Lord's own portion" (Sir. 17:17).

[65]. It is not surprising that the Jews had such an idea. The doctrine of the one God in the Old Testament was intended to encourage Israel to stand firm in her faith in the face of danger from foreign powers. It does so by stressing that Yahweh directs the universe, that he has history, foreign gods and foreign regimes in his control. Two documents are frequently applied to argue for this conviction:

the one is the creation story of Gen. 1:1-2:4a and the other is Deutero-Isaiah. Both documents were formed in the period of the Exile.

The idea that God is the mighty saviour of Israel faced a crucial challenge during this period. Ackroyd points out that one of the obvious consequences of the Babylonian conquest was that "the Babylonian gods have been victorious", *i.e.*, "the gods of Babylon had superior power" (1968: 41f.). As a result, some Jews lost their confidence in Yahweh and accepted those deities of Babylon (*cf.* 1968: 42). Therefore, the main task of the documents formed in this period was to encourage Israel by claiming that Yahweh was more powerful than the Babylonian gods.

The *sitz im leben* of the creation statement in Gen. 1:1-2:4a is "the Enuma Elish epic at the Babylonian New Year festival" (Westermann 1984: 93), which is a praise of Marduk's creation (*cf.* 1984: 94). Von Rad rightly recognizes the main issue of this passage as not protology, but "faith in salvation and election" (1972: 46). "Israel looked back in faith from her own election to the creation of the world, and from there drew the line to herself from the outermost limit of the protological to the center of the soteriological" (*ibid.*). Therefore, the creation story serves as "a start of the divine saving work in Israel" (von Rad 1962: 140).

Similarly, Westermann regards Gen. 1:1-2:4a as an "overture" to the whole of the P document (*cf.* 1984: 93). Wenham adopts this position and says that this passage "introduces the great train of events that began with creation, leads on to the call of the patriarchs and the exodus from Egypt and climaxes with the law-giving at Sinai and the establishment of worship in the tabernacle" (1987: 10; *cf.* Westermann 1984: 93). In order to protect against the creation myth of Marduk and in order to encourage those Israelites who lost their confidence in Yahweh, the authors of the P document present Gen. 1 and maintain that Yahweh is not only the tribal deity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but also "the sovereign Lord of the whole earth" (Wenham 1987: 10). It seems that Israel did not recognize Yahweh as the creator of the universe until they met the creation myth of Marduk.

Striking evidence which indicates the creation story as Jewish rather than universal is the interpretation of the sabbath as "the ultimate moment of creation" (Ackroyd 1968: 94; Gen. 2:2-3). Because of the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, the observance of the sabbath and circumcision became of the utmost importance (*cf.* Ackroyd 1968: 35). P, therefore, "reaches a first climax in the sabbath" (1968: 94), just as the building of a temple for Marduk is the climax in the Babylonian Marduk myth (*cf. ibid.*). This is why P connects the commandment of the sabbath in the Decalogue with creation (Ex. 20:8-11), while the D document connects the sabbath with the exodus (Deut. 5: 12-15).

The same intention of soteriological understanding of creation can be found in Deutero-Isaiah. "Deutero-Isaiah obviously sees a saving event in the creation itself" (von Rad 1962: 137; *cf.* Isa. 44:24; 54:5). Deutero-Isaiah was formed in the late age of the exile period. McKenzie claims that "the dominant theme of Second Isaiah is not salvation, but the mission of Israel for which the nation is saved" (1968: lvii). Westermann and Ackroyd, however, seem to be right. Westermann claims that the theme of Deutero-Isaiah is salvation (*cf.* 1969: 9). The prophet is "a prophet of salvation standing in the ranks of the prophets of doom", who "clothed his message of salvation in the language of the psalms of praise" (1969: 9f.). Ackroyd points out that the main messages of Deutero-Isaiah are: (1) the understanding of the disaster of exile, *i.e.*, "the prophet's understanding of how his people has come to be where it is"; and (2) prospect of salvation, *i.e.*, "the anticipation which he shows of events in which God is acting and will continue to act to effect his purposes" (1968: 121).

Clements notes that the fullest and the firmest expression of the sense of one God in the Old Testament is the monotheism of Deutero-Isaiah (*e.g.*, Isa. 44:6; *cf.* 1978: 73). It is more likely, however, that what concerns the prophet is God's power to save Israel rather than monotheism. Westermann maintains that the

statement of one God in Isa. 44:6 is not a statement of monotheism, but a "trial speech" in which "the foreign gods are summoned to judgment" (1969: 16f.). The purpose is to claim that God is "the only God who acts in history seen as a whole" and that "the fact that Marduk acquired a vast empire for Babylon did not prove him to be lord of history" (Westermann 1967: 17). In short, the main task of Deutero-Isaiah is to announce that Yahweh still has power to control the nations and their history. Consequently he will be able to deliver Israel from the exile in Babylon, for he is superior to other gods.

In Trito-Isaiah, which was written in the period after the Exile, it may be argued that there is a new concern for the Gentiles (cf. Isa. 56:3-8; Westermann 1969: 314-316; McKenzie 1968: 151). However, although a new opportunity is given here for the Gentiles to be included in God's people, "the coming of salvation is associated with the observance of the Sabbath" (McKenzie 1968: 150; Isa. 56:4, 6) and with sacrifice (v. 7). In other words, although the prophet opened up a new way for Gentiles to become God's people, it still had to be in terms of Jewish tradition, that is, through observance of the sabbath and sacrifice.

Fitzmyer sums up the Jewish attitude thus: "no Jew would have denied that Yahweh was the God of all human beings; but though his salvation was for all, Israel was favored" (1990: 841). Therefore, God is still Israel's God rather than a Gentile God. Gentiles may be included in God's people, but only if they adopt Jewish faith and practice.

[66]. In the last sentence of Rom. 3:30, Paul says that the one God will justify the circumcised ἐκ πίστεως and the uncircumcised διὰ τῆς πίστεως. Most commentators suggest that there is no difference between ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ τῆς πίστεως (cf. Cranfield 1975: 222; Käsemann 1980: 104; Dunn 1988: 189). Stowers, however, recognizes Paul's different use of prepositions: "διὰ appears when the Gentiles are in view and ἐκ when either or both Jews and Gentiles are under discussion" (1989: 669). He also mentions that διὰ is used by Paul in an "instrumental" sense, while ἐκ is used as "a way of denoting origins, participation, and membership" (1989: 669f., 672). Finally, Stowers concludes that "the phrase διὰ τῆς πίστεως refers very specifically to Jesus' atoning life and death for the redemption of the Gentiles" and that Paul applies ἐκ πίστεως to indicate that "both Jews and Gentiles share in blessings ἐκ πίστεως of Abraham and Jesus" (1989: 674). In the specific context of Rom. 3, διὰ τῆς πίστεως "describes the crucial factor in Jesus' atonement for Gentile sins" (1989: 670) which is expressed in 3:22, 25.

[67]. Paul is clearly talking to a mixed community in 1 Cor. 9:19-23. He says: ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαῖος in v. 20 and says: τοῖς ἀνόμοις ὡς ἄνομος in v. 21.

[68]. Chadwick claims that Paul uses his opponents' arguments against them. They are quoted back at them in an "ironical tone" (1954-5: 263). When Paul says ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαῖος and τοῖς ἀνόμοις ὡς ἄνομος, he is responding to the attacks of his opponents.

[69]. Paul also points out another purpose in v. 23b: ἵνα συγκοινωνῶς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι. Barrett explains συγκοινωνός as "participation in (the benefits of) the Gospel" (1971: 216). In other words, "it is in fulfilling his own vocation as an evangelist that he appropriates the Gospel himself" (*ibid.*). Fee maintains that by using συγκοινωνός what Paul means is that "along with them, he hopes to share in the final blessings of the gospel" (1987: 432). This purpose, however, is subsidiary to the main point of my argument.



[70]. The structure of 1 Cor. 9:19-23 runs like this:

Introduction:

Ἐλεύτερος γὰρ ὢν ἐκ πάντων πᾶσιν ἐμαυτὸν ἐδούλωσα,  
ἵνα τοὺς πλείονας κερδήσω

Illustrations:

- (1) ἐγενόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαῖος,  
ἵνα Ἰουδαίους κερδήσω  
(= τοῖς ὑπὸ νόμον ὡς ὑπὸ νόμον ...  
ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον κερδήσω)
- (2) τοῖς ἀνόμοις ὡς ἄνομος ...  
ἵνα κερδάνω τοὺς ἀνόμους
- (3) ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν ἀσθενής,  
ἵνα τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς κερδήσω

Conclusion:

τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα,  
ἵνα πάντως τινὰς σώσω

Reasons:

- (1) διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον
- (2) ἵνα συγκοινωνῶς αὐτοῦ γένωμαι

It is noteworthy that each ἵνα-clause in the "introduction" and "illustrations" has the verb κερδαίνω and that the ἵνα-clause in the "conclusion" has the verb σώζω. These two clauses suggest that in 1 Cor. 9:19-23 κερδαίνω is the key verb which indicates the main purpose of Paul's accommodation and that σώζω and κερδαίνω are synonyms (cf. Fee 1987: 423, fn. 9).

[71]. Daube claims that κερδαίνω is a missionary term in early Christianity, which means both "to convert", or "to win over" an unbeliever (e.g., 1 Cor. 9:19ff.; 1 Pet. 3:1) and "to win back a sinner" (e.g., Mt. 18:15; cf. 1956: 352, 360). These usages are also found in Judaism in which κερδαίνω is used to translate *śakhar*, *niśkar* and *hištakker*. As regards the usage "to win back" a sinner, Daube cites *Pesiqta Rabbathi* 166b by way of illustration and explains it as follows:

"God says, When I conquer I suffer loss (*hiphsidh*), but when I am conquered I gain (*hištakker*). I conquered dealing with the generation of the Flood, but I lost (*hiphsidh*), for I destroyed all those masses ('*okhloza*', the Greek ὄχλος). But when the Golden Calf was made, Moses conquered me and I gained (*hištakker*) all those masses" (1956: 359).

Daube finds that there is not any Rabbinic term which denotes "to convert", but that there is an Aramaic term, '*aghar*', which is equivalent to *śakhar*. Here he cites *Baba Metzia* 8c and says that:

"... the Aramaic equivalent of *śakhar* ... '*aghar*', is employed in a manner all but positive proof that proselytes proper, won over from another faith, might be described by this word. Simeon ben Shatah (of the first half of the 1st cent. B.C.) refused to regard as his own a pearl found on an ass which had been bought for him from an Arab, declaring that he was no *barbari*, barbarian, and that he preferred hearing the Arab say 'Blessed be the God of the Jews'- *scil.* whose followers are so honest- to all '*aghar*', 'gain', of this world. Surely, where such an expression was possible, it was also possible to 'gain a proselyte'" (1956: 359f.).

[72]. For example *b. Shabbath* 31a:

"Our Rabbis taught: A certain heathen once came before Shammai and asked him, 'How many *Toroth* [plural form of *Torah*] have you?' 'Two', he replied: 'the Written Torah and the Oral Torah'. 'I believe you with respect to the Written, but not with respect to the Oral Torah; make me a proselyte on condition that you teach me the Written Torah [only]'.

[But] he scolded and repulsed him in anger. When he went before Hillel, he accepted him as a proselyte."

In this case, Hillel accepts the Gentile as proselyte without asking him to learn the oral Torah. In other words, he makes the law no more burdensome than necessary for the sake of his missionary aims.

[73]. Barrett claims that Paul not only adopts the Jewish usage of κερδαίνω (i.e., to make the law easy to accept), but also prepares "to abandon it altogether" (1971: 211). This, however, only conforms to τοῖς ἀνόμοις ὡς ἄνομος, but not to ἐγγερόμην τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὡς Ἰουδαῖος nor to τοῖς ὑπὸ νόμον ὡς ὑπὸ νόμον. It is more likely that Paul abandons the law when he is facing Gentiles and that he practises the law when he preaches to Jews.

[74]. Fee analyses the structure of 1 Cor. 7 as follows:

- vv. 1-7 to the married:
  - to *stay* married
- vv. 8-9 to the unmarried and widows:
  - to *remain* unmarried
- vv. 10-11 to the married (both partners believers):
  - to *remain* married
- vv. 12-16 to those with an unbelieving spouse:
  - to *remain* married
- vv. 25-38 to virgins:
  - to *remain* unmarried
- vv. 39-40 to married women (and widows):
  - to be *bound* and to *remain* in that way

It is, therefore, clear that Paul advises the Corinthians to *remain* in their original status (cf. 1987: 268).

[75]. Fee explains why the Corinthians look for a change in social status in terms of "the eschatological urgency of ... present existence". This urgency led the Corinthians, for example, to seek to dissolve their marriages in order to obtain the spiritual benefits of celibacy (cf. 1987: 269, 307, 321). Fee says:

"What would seem to lie behind this position is ... their present pneumatic existence, which has Hellenistic dualism at its roots and their own brand of 'spiritualized eschatology' as its repeated expression. As those who are 'spiritual' they are above the merely earthly existence of others; marriage belongs to this age that is passing away" (1987: 269).

Paul, therefore, encourages them to remain as they were when they were called, because he is convinced that the κλήσις θεοῦ has already rendered all social matters of status irrelevant. As a result, change is not necessary (cf. Fee 1987: 309).

Bartchy points out that the conviction that "there is no male and female in Christ" (Gal. 3:28) could have led the Corinthians into two contrasting kinds of sexual behaviour (chs. 5f. and ch. 7). He argues that the Corinthians' freedom from sexuality, as well as their public prophecies, were "all signs and confirmations that they had already been *called* by God to an exalted and perfected existence" (1973: 131f., my italics). Paul, on the other hand, emphasizes that the κλήσις θεοῦ had come to the Corinthians without reference to their various religious and social-legal situations (1 Cor. 1:26). Therefore, nothing is to be gained before God by changing one's social or religious status (cf. 1973: 140, 148).

Scroggs argues that what Paul asserts in Gal. 3:28 is not the abolition of distinctions among people, but the rejection of "any *value judgments* made on the basis of distinctions". Paul believes that "each person in the *eschatological community* stands as equal beside his neighbor" (1972: 288, my italics).

Meeks emphasizes the importance of "the eschatological sacrament of baptism" in the Corinthian church (cf. 1973: 207). He says that if the Corinthian 'spiritual'



believes that "in baptism the Christian has put on again the image of the Creator, in whom 'there is no male and female', then for him the old world has passed away" (*ibid.*). As a result, the 'spirituals' claim that "the removal of the symbolic differentia of the sexes would have for them a value" (*ibid.*). Paul, however, insists on "the preservation of the symbols of the present, differentiated order", but that "these symbols have lost their ultimate significance, for 'the form of this world is passing away'" (1973: 208).

It is very likely that there were some "spirituals" in the Corinthian church who, in expectation of the imminence of the eschaton, believed that changing one's social status, especially changing one's marriage status, had value for salvation. Paul, accepts only κλησις θεοῦ as essential for salvation and refuses to acknowledge anything else as having the same value. Consequently, he urges the Corinthians not to make such changes. They are not to think that changing one's social status has anything to do with salvation.

[76]. Dawes (1990: 685) suggests that vv. 17-24 has the following structure:

| <u>principle</u>   | <u>illustration</u>  | <u>reason</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| v. 17              | v. 18 (circumcision) | v. 19         |
| v. 20              | v. 21 (slavery)      | vv. 22f.      |
| v. 24 (conclusion) |                      |               |

Paul claims that what he is saying in Corinth is what he says everywhere else too: οὕτως ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις πάσαις διατάσσομαι (v. 17b). The verb διατάσσομαι refers to "the authoritative teaching of the Apostle" (Tomson 1990: 271). To be sure, v. 17a is the main principle Paul teaches in all churches.

[77]. E.g., Isa. 42:8f. Westermann claims that this "oracle of salvation" refers to "Yahweh's saving acts towards Israel in the past", a combination, perhaps, of the call of Abraham and the deliverance from Egypt (*cf.* 1969: 69-71). McKenzie, however, maintains that "the ends of the earth" and "farthest corners" refer to "the places in Mesopotamia to which the people of Judah had been transported by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C., rather than to the call of Abraham from Mesopotamia" (1968: 30). In the context of Deutero-Isaiah, it is very likely that the author is indeed recalling God's deliverance of his people in the past, but that he puts his emphasis on a more recent deliverance; the deliverance of the exiles from Babylon. God's call is naturally connected with his deliverance of his people in history (*cf.* Isa. 50:2).

[78]. Barrett (1971: 168), Bruce (1971: 71) and Conzelmann (1975: 126, fn. 11), all quote *Ass. Mos.* 8:3 ("... their young sons will be cut by physicians to bring forward their foreskins") as evidence. The original text, however, is very uncertain (Priest in *OTP* 1: 931, fn. d). Fee claims that the force of the operation in *Ass. Mos.* 8:3 is that it is part of God's judgment (*cf.* 1987: 312, fn. 27). This text, therefore, perhaps simply suggests that the practice of Mosaic law was to be prohibited, or even punished (e.g., 2 Macc. 6:10).

Another passage which is often taken as evidence is 1 Macc. 1:14f.: "So they [certain renegades] built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, according to Gentile custom, and removed the marks of circumcision, and abandoned the holy covenant ..." Similarly *Jos. Ant.* 12:241: "wherefore they desired his permission to build them a Gymnasium at Jerusalem. And when he had given them leave they also hid the circumcision of their genitals, that even when they were naked they might appear to be Greeks ..." Bartlett claims that the gymnasium was a "training ground for the citizens of a Greek city-state" (1973: 22) and that the stadium gave Jerusalem "a higher status and greater opportunities for trade and contact with other cities" (*ibid.*). It did, however, also lead to the religious crisis of Judaism, for some Jews continued to practise Mosaic law, while others did not. "The Law of Moses was no longer the law governing Jerusalem" (*ibid.*). To remove the mark of circumcision meant abandoning the covenant and consequently also membership of God's people.

This interpretation does not fit the context of 1 Cor. 7:18 very well however. Furthermore, as circumcision entails the removal of the foreskin, it is very difficult to see how one could disguise the marks. Consequently, removing the mark of circumcision is perhaps simply a rhetorical term which is the opposite of v. 18b: ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ κέκληται τις ἐκλήθη, μὴ περιτεμνέσθω. To keep circumcision possibly meant continuing the custom of circumcising Jewish male babies.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

This thesis asks the question: How does one respond to God's saving grace in one's own culture in order to obtain salvation? The subject chosen is Paul's missionary tactics on faith and the law. Consequently, the precise question is: How does Paul teach congregations of Jews and Gentiles, respectively and together, to respond to God's saving grace in Jesus' death and resurrection in a context dominated by Jewish law?

#### 5.1 SUMMARY

The investigation began with the debate as to whether Paul has a consistent attitude to the law or not. In answer to this question, both Cranfield and Käsemann maintain that Paul's attitude to the law is coherent, while Räisänen claims that Paul's theology on the law is full of difficulties and inconsistencies. In fact, Paul's attitude to the law is not verbally coherent. His statements on the law are not so consistent as Cranfield and Käsemann claim, nor so completely confused as Räisänen maintains. Rather, Paul's thought is coherent, but not systematic. This is because Paul was not a theologian, but rather a missionary, who travelled around the synagogues and churches preaching the gospel and debating with his opponents.

Paul very likely began his Gentile mission with a law-bound tactic. Later, however, when he had difficulty in bringing Gentiles into the Christian community by a law-bound tactic, he adopted a law-free tactic instead. His opponents, the

Judaizers, challenged him about this. Paul, in fact, had a theological dilemma after his encounter with the risen Christ: Why did God give the law and then send his son? He could not solve this problem, but he had to reply to the challenge. That is to say, Paul had to write letters in answer to specific questions, before he had formed an established doctrine. In other words, Paul's thought was in the process during his mission. It is, therefore, not surprising that Paul's arguments on the law are not verbally consistent.

Next are examined Sanders' and Dunn's statements regarding on what occasions Paul rejects the law. Sanders claims that Paul rejects the law as the requirement for "getting in", but that apart from this, the law is still valid for "staying in". Dunn maintains that what Paul opposes is the "works of the law", circumcision, food laws and the sabbath in particular, with their social function as Jewish national identity and boundary markers. Dunn's argument ignores the fact that Paul does not prohibit Jews from practising the law, including circumcision, food laws and the sabbath. Sanders' suggestion fails to see that Paul opposes the imposition of the observance of the law on Gentiles.

Accordingly, the position adopted here is that Paul provides a coherent strategy on faith and three different tactics on the law. Paul consistently maintains that faith in Christ is essential for salvation for both Jews and Gentiles. Then, he presents three missionary tactics on the law to meet different situations: (1) as for Jews, Paul encourages them to obey the whole law, (2) as for Gentiles, Paul insists that the law is not necessary for them and (3) as for a mixed community of Jews and Gentiles, Paul allows them to make up their own mind and asks each individual not to impose his own particular conviction upon the others.

### Paul and His Opponents

It is very likely that Paul's opponents were mainly Jewish Christian Judaizers who not only believed in Jesus as the Messiah but also held the conviction of

"membership legalism": (1) They believed that one could, and could only, be saved by membership of the covenant community. Therefore (2) they considered circumcision, the official sign of the membership of the covenant community, as most important. As a result, (3) they ignored the laws apart from circumcision (and perhaps food laws and the sabbath as well), because the rest of the law was not so important for membership. (4) They, therefore, required those Gentiles who wanted to become members of God's people to undertake circumcision, because they regarded the Christian movement as only a sect within Judaism and maintained that there was no salvation outside the covenant community.

Paul's missionary tactics on faith and the law were mainly directed against his opponents' "membership legalism". Paul turned to "covenantal nomism" and emphasized: (1) Salvation came, not from membership of the covenant community, but from God's saving grace, re-interpreted by Paul as God's saving grace in Christ's death and resurrection. Given this essential conviction, proper responses were required. (2) As for the Jews, Paul asked them to obey the whole law, circumcision *and* the rest of the law. He did so on the grounds that the whole of the law was God's gift to the Jews in order that they might respond properly to God's saving grace. (3) As for the Gentiles, Paul insisted that observance of Jewish law was not necessary for them to become members of God's people; for Jewish law, by definition, was not valid for Gentiles. In other words, Gentiles could respond to the same grace in a way appropriate to them.

The main difference between Paul and his opponents was, therefore, that his opponents claimed that *both* faith *and* the law were essential for salvation, while Paul maintained that *only* faith was essential, the law being *optional*.

#### Paul's Missionary Tactics for Jews

Although Paul describes himself as an "apostle to the Gentiles", he still has to explain his attitude to faith and the law to Jews, for most of his congregations are

mixed communities, which include some Jewish Christians. Moreover, his opponents are Jewish Christian Judaizers; with them he must debate from the point of view of Jews.

Paul's first missionary tactic on the law is that he accuses Jews of transgressing the law. In Gal. 6:13, Paul rebukes his opponents for observing only circumcision, but not obeying the rest of the law. In Rom. 2:1-24, Paul accuses his opponents and certain other Jewish leaders of boasting of their possession of the law, while they themselves breaking it. These charges are obviously directed against his opponents' over-confidence in their conviction of "membership legalism". They believe that possession of the law, circumcision in particular, is equivalent to having a safeguard at the time of judgment. Consequently, they boast of possessing the law, but practise only circumcision and fail to observe the rest of the law. As a result, Paul accuses his opponents of keeping only circumcision, but of not obeying the rest of the law. This indicates that Paul regards the rest of the law as also important. This conviction leads to Paul's second tactic on the law.

Paul's second tactic on the law is to encourage Jews to obey the whole law, rather than to keep circumcision only. In Rom. 2:25-29, Paul asks Jews to abandon "membership legalism" and to adopt his "covenantal nomism". Paul claims (1) that circumcision is not valuable in "membership legalism", *i.e.*, circumcision is worthless, if the rest of the law is not obeyed at the same time and (2) that circumcision is valid in "covenantal nomism", *i.e.*, circumcision is worthy when the rest of the law is also observed. In other words, Paul encourages Jewish Christians to obey the whole law in order to respond properly to God's saving grace. This assertion is confirmed by 1 Cor. 7:19, where Paul urges the Corinthians, including Jews, not to seek a change of status as regards circumcision or uncircumcision, but rather to obey the ἐντολή θεοῦ, which is equivalent to the law. In 1 Cor. 9:20, Paul further confesses that for the sake of his missionary purpose, he himself observes the law in the company of Jews. Although Paul encourages Jews to obey the whole law, observance is considered not as a way of earning God's favour, nor of keeping



up one's membership of the covenant community, but rather as a life-style in response to God's saving grace.

The reason why Paul provides these tactics on the law is that the law being important for Jews, unless they are allowed to continue to observe it, it will be very difficult for them to become Christians. The law has been at the heart of Israelite religion since they were elected as Yahweh's peculiar people and received the covenant. The relationship of the covenant is two-sided: God will continue to protect Israel, as long as Israel responds to God's grace by obeying his guidance, namely, the law. The law is, therefore, intended to show Israel how to live as a covenant people and to maintain the covenant. The law became more and more important during the period of the exile, because the disaster was explained in terms of the rejection of God's ordinances. Accordingly, the hope of restoration came from God's forgiveness and from people's willingness to observe the law. During the Maccabean crisis, the law became Jewish national identity which marked Jews off from other nations and from Hellenism. Strict observance of the law, therefore, became the characteristic of the pious Jew in both politics and religion. This is the practical reason why Paul allows Jews to continue to obey the law.

This practical reason is confirmed by the theological reason given in Rom. 4:9-12, 3:1-2 and 9:4. In Rom. 4:9-12, Paul claims that Abraham's circumcision serves as the sign and seal which confirms, rather than is replaced by, Abraham's faith. As a result, it is both Abraham's faith and his circumcision that make Abraham the father of Jewish Christians. In other words, Paul recognizes that circumcision is significant for Jews, because it is assigned by God. This conviction is supported by Rom. 3:1-2 and 9:4. There, Paul includes the law as one of the Jewish advantages which are given by God. It is, therefore, fair to say that Paul encourages Jews to obey the whole law, because, in practice, the law is too important for Jews to abandon and because, in theological terms, Paul recognizes that the law, including circumcision, is given by God.

Concerning faith, Paul consistently insists that faith in Christ is the *only* condition for both Jews and Gentiles to become members of God's people, while his opponents regard faith as only *one* of the conditions of salvation. In Gal. 2:15-16, Paul opposes the "men from James" who insist that Jewish Christians cannot have table fellowship with uncircumcised Gentile Christians, because the latter are still "sinners". That is to say, Paul opposes the view that faith in Christ alone is insufficient to bring one into the community of God's people and that, as a result, faith has to be supplemented by "works of the law", circumcision in particular. Paul disagrees with this statement and reminds Peter that, although they are Jews by birth and by circumcision, they still must believe in Jesus as the Messiah in order to become members of God's people. In short, "works of the law", including circumcision, food laws and the sabbath, have nothing to do with becoming Christians. Faith is the only condition of salvation, even for the Jews.

In Phil. 3:2-11, Paul clearly indicates that he is fighting against "membership legalism". He accuses his opponents of boasting of physical circumcision. Then, Paul describes himself as a model Jew who possesses all the Jewish advantages, including inherited privileges (a good pedigree and circumcision) and considerable personal achievement as regards the law. When he compares these advantages with faith in Christ, however, he finds that Jewish advantages have no place in the gaining of salvation. What is important for salvation remains God's saving grace, relocated by Paul in the new, saving action in Jesus' death and resurrection. Hence, knowing, choosing and depending on this doctrine become the integral modes of accepting this gift. In short, Paul maintains that a Jew, even with all the Jewish advantages, needs faith in Christ in order to become a member of God's people.

Paul's opponents claim that both faith and the law are important for salvation, but Paul maintains that only faith is essential and that the law <sup>is</sup> optional. This is because Paul considers Jesus' death as χάρις, ἀπολύτρωσις and ἰλαστήριον (Rom. 3:24f.). Jesus' death, therefore, can replace, or at least fulfil, the main functions of the law. As a result, the law is no longer necessary. In the Old

Testament, χάρις and ἀπολύτρωσις are terms used of God's saving grace in the Exodus and Restoration. This is the most important part of salvation. Paul now re-interprets God's saving grace in Jesus' death. In other words, in the past, it was God's saving grace in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and from Babylon that constituted salvation, but now, it is God's new, saving grace in Jesus' death that brings salvation. Contemporary Jews, therefore, need faith in Christ, the new way leading to salvation, in order to become members of God's people. Paul also claims that Jesus' death is ἱλαστήριον, which, in the Old Testament, is used not only of the most important elements of Israelite religion, the ark, the covenant, the Temple, the law and expiation on the Day of Atonement, but also is used of a "new Temple", which surpasses in value even the old system. It is, therefore, fair to conclude that it is his theology, that is, his belief that Jesus' death has replaced, or at least fulfilled, the main functions of the law, that leads Paul to consider the law as optional. Accordingly, the law is no longer necessary. Faith in Christ becomes the only condition which brings salvation.

#### Paul's Missionary Tactics for Gentiles

Paul is an "apostle to the Gentiles". The Gentiles are his main concern. Consequently, a great proportion of his epistles, Galatians and Romans in particular, deals with the question of how Gentiles can become members of God's people. Because Paul is arguing against his opponents' "membership legalism", which insists that Gentiles have to obey Jewish law, circumcision in particular, the precise question here is: Whether Gentiles have to observe Jewish law in order to become members of God's people? Paul's answers are: (1) that the law is not necessary for Gentiles to become members of God's people and (2) that faith in Christ is the only condition for Gentiles to enter into the community of God's people.

The Abraham story in Gal. 3 and in Rom. 4 are the most important passages for understanding Paul's missionary tactics towards Gentiles. The Abraham story in

Gen. 12-25 serves as a new beginning which indicates God's solution for the human sin and failure described in Gen. 1-11. Abraham is described as a hero of obedience. He is a man who obeys God's commands completely. In Judaism, Abraham is considered to be a national and religious hero who faithfully obeys what God commands. The sacrifice of Isaac is regarded as the most important example of Abraham's obedience. The hero of the Abraham story is, therefore, employed by Judaism as a model of the pious Jew who obeys the law faithfully. Paul, however, interprets Abraham in a very different way and lays his emphasis on Abraham's being reckoned righteous by faith (Gen. 15:6). Abraham, according to Paul's interpretation, is a prototype of the Gentile Christian who comes to be a member of God's people by faith rather than by observance of the law.

In Gal. 3:6-9, Paul is arguing against his opponents' assertion that Abraham is a hero of obedience to God's commandments and that therefore those Gentiles who want to be "descendants of Abraham" in order to inherit the blessings given through him have to do what he did, that is, obey the law. Paul re-interprets the Abraham story by quoting Gen. 15:6, 12:3 and 18:18. He claims that from the beginning God intended to give his promise to Gentiles as well as to Jews and that Abraham is a "man of faith". As a result, those Gentiles who want to be "descendants of Abraham" have to follow Abraham by being "men of faith". This approach has nothing to do with the law. What Paul insists on in Gal. 3:6-9 is, therefore, that the law is not necessary for Gentiles to become members of God's people. What is essential is faith in Christ.

In Gal. 3:15-18, Paul replies to his opponents' argument that Abraham was reckoned as righteous by keeping the entire law, even though the law was given later. Paul employs the "example" of a testament which is irrevocable after ratification. He maintains that the law was given 430 years after the promise was made to Abraham and that, therefore, the law cannot annul or add to what God had promised. The "promise" Paul is talking about here refers to this: ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοῖ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ θεός (Gal. 3:8). What Paul emphasizes, therefore, is that

God has promised that the Gentiles may become members of his people by means of faith. Consequently, nobody can require them to observe the law in order first to become full proselytes and thereafter members of God's people. Next, Paul identifies Christ as the only true σπέρμα to inherit Abraham's role in the transmission of God's blessings. That is to say that faith in Christ, not observance of the law, is the only way by means of which Gentiles can inherit the promise and blessings and become members of God's people.

In Rom. 4:9-15, Paul's argument concentrates on circumcision. This is because his opponents fasten onto Abraham's acceptance of circumcision after he had been reckoned as righteous. They claim that the blessings of Ps. 32:1-2 and the promise given through Abraham are prepared for Abraham's physical descendants, Jews and proselytes, only and that therefore any Gentile seeking admission into the community of God's people must undertake circumcision. Paul, however, maintains that Abraham had already been reckoned as righteous before he accepted circumcision, and that, therefore, faith alone is the decisive element. He, then, describes Abraham's circumcision as a confirmation of faith which does not affect the validity of faith in the sense of declaring valid what is already so. Paul is, therefore, insisting here that Gentiles are included in the community of God's people without circumcision.

Paul very strongly prohibits the Galatians from undertaking circumcision in Gal. 5:2-5. Here, again, Paul is fighting against his opponents' "membership legalism". Accordingly, Paul warns the Galatians that circumcision is only one rite or one element in the whole law in which each part is equally important. To emphasize circumcision only, therefore, is nonsense. Then, Paul maintains that claiming circumcision to be necessary for salvation is equivalent to claiming God's saving grace in Jesus' death to be insufficient. This is, of course, falls short of belief in Jesus as the Messiah. Moreover, Paul reminds the Galatians that what they are waiting for is an eschatological deliverance which may be received only by the Spirit and by faith. As a result, to accept circumcision as necessary for salvation is

tantamount to falling away from grace. In addition to, and indeed motivating these theological reasons, the acceptance of circumcision means, in practice, a break away from Paul's group in favour of his opponents, for lack of circumcision is the most distinctive sign which distinguishes Paul's group from his opponents. Paul, therefore, has to prohibit his converts from accepting circumcision in order to win back their loyalty.

Paul always emphasizes the importance of "faith". "Faith", in Paul, means to hear, to understand, to accept, to confess, to submit to and to trust in the gospel of the death, resurrection and lordship of Jesus. Taking into account the context in which Paul is fighting against his opponents' "membership legalism", "faith" more precisely means choosing Paul's way of attaining righteousness, *i.e.*, depending on Jesus' death and resurrection alone, rather than choosing his opponents' way, *i.e.*, depending on both faith and the law. In other words, "faith" is a way of becoming God's people without any reference to the law. In Rom. 4:5, 17-25, Paul's opponents maintain that, without circumcision, it is impossible to become a member of God's people. Paul, however, claims that to become a member of God's people without circumcision is possible, because God has performed the decisive saving action in Jesus' death and resurrection. Accordingly, to accept Jesus as Lord is sufficient for becoming God's people. The law is no longer necessary. In short, in this Gentile context, "faith" for Paul simply means recognizing Jesus as Lord *alone*. For Paul's opponents, on the other hand, "faith" means observing the law *and* recognizing Jesus as God's appointed Messiah.

Paul regards Jewish law as unnecessary for Gentiles, for three reasons. (1) In terms of theology, Paul considers God to have performed a new, saving action in Jesus' death and resurrection. As a result, the law is replaced, or at least fulfilled, by Jesus' death (Rom. 3:24f.). This conviction is consistently emphasized by Paul when he is dealing with both Jews and Gentiles. (2) In practice, Jewish laws, especially circumcision, food laws and the sabbath, are too difficult for Gentiles to practise. Indeed, the requirement of the observance of the law would lead Gentile



Christians to be the object of ridicule and to be isolated from their fellow Gentiles. Consequently, if Paul wants to increase the success of Christian preaching, he has to abandon the requirement of the observance of the law. (3) From his own experience, Gentile Christians can experience the Spirit in their uncircumcised state (Gal. 3:1-5). Therefore, Gentiles can become members of God's people without circumcision.

#### Paul's Missionary Tactics for A Mixed Community

In most cases, Paul faced a mixed congregation composed of both Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. In this kind of community, Paul first combines the tactics he employed towards Jews and Gentiles respectively, namely that Jews should practise the law while Gentiles need not. Then, for the sake of the unity of the congregation, he asks both groups to respect each other's different choices and to refrain from imposing their own convictions on the other. The convictions of group A are not to be imposed on group B.

The main issue of the Antioch episode (Gal. 2:11-14) is table fellowship and circumcision. The "men from James" emphasize the importance of "membership legalism" and claim that Gentiles must accept circumcision in order to be counted as members of God's people. Consequently, those Gentile Christians who were not circumcised were still regarded as "sinners" and were prohibited from table fellowship with pious Jews. Paul disagrees with the "men from James" and reminds Peter that before the "men from James" came, they had shared the conviction that uncircumcised Gentile Christians were not "sinners", since they had been justified by faith in Christ. As a result, having table fellowship with them was not harmful for a faithful Jew.

Then, Paul rebukes Peter and regards his withdrawal from table fellowship as equivalent to the compelling of Gentile Christians to *ἰουδαΐζειν*, i.e., to be circumcised. In other words, Paul says that by withdrawing from table fellowship,

Peter is, in fact, putting Gentile Christians under pressure to be circumcised if association with Jewish Christians is to be resumed. That is to say, Paul forbids Jews to compel Gentiles to practise circumcision. This is Paul's main teaching on the law in a mixed community, at least at Antioch. Moreover, it is fair to suggest that by rebuking Peter for his withdrawal from table fellowship, Paul is in fact asking Peter to resume table fellowship. This will lead Jews to eat non-kosher food and therefore to break the food laws. To require Jews to abandon food laws is in contradiction with Paul's usual tactics which are to allow Jews to practise the law. This is because in the Antioch episode, it is the Gentiles who are under attack. They, in this case, are the weak group. Paul always protects the weak group by asking the strong group to do more. It is from the strong that concessions are demanded.

Paul explains his tactics in a mixed community more fully in Rom. 14:1-15:13. There are two groups in the Roman church: "the weak", mainly Jewish Christians and "the strong", mainly Gentile Christians. The Jewish Christians observe the law, food laws and the sabbath, while the Gentile Christians do not. These two groups are in conflict with each other, for each group is attempting to make its own convictions about conduct the sole and exclusive norm for response to the gospel. Moreover, they each intend to impose these convictions on the other group. Accordingly, Paul encourages both groups, not to engage in conflict, but to "welcome" one another and to pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding. In other words, Paul requires each group to respect the convictions of the other group. No one is allowed to impose his conviction on those who differ from him.

Then, Paul asks each individual to make up his own mind about what he believes to be the proper way of expressing his faith, that is, Jewish Christians may choose observance of the law as their response to faith, while Gentile Christians choose their own way, a way that does not involve the observance of Jewish law.

Finally, Paul asks more of the strong, Gentile Christian, in order to help the weak group and to keep the community together. Negatively, Paul requires Gentile Christians to restrict the practice of their freedom, which allow them to eat anything, if it is harmful for Jewish Christians. Positively, Paul asks Gentile Christians to practise food laws. This contradicts his usual tactics for Gentiles, namely freedom from the law. Paul, indeed, requires the strong group to do more, in order to protect the weak group and to keep the community at peace.

Paul's missionary tactic on faith for a mixed community is in accordance with that for Jews and for Gentiles respectively. Paul claims that faith in Christ is the universal foundation for all, Jews and Gentiles, to become members of God's people. In Rom. 3:28-30, Paul's opponents claim that Yahweh is the one true God, the creator of the universe. Therefore he has the power to control the nations and to deliver Israel from their hands. This means that although God is the universal creator, he is still peculiar to Israel, with the result that salvation is restricted to the covenant community. Consequently, those Gentiles who want to share the blessings of God must undertake "works of the law" in order to become proselytes and thereafter members of God's people. Paul, however, insists on his "universal soteriology" which stresses that God, the creator, is Israel's Lord and also Lord of all. As a result, he will justify both Jew and Gentile alike, namely by faith in Christ.

Paul has a very coherent tactic on faith. On the other hand, he is sufficiently free in providing very flexible tactics on the law - Jews may practise the law, while Gentiles need not. Moreover, he sometimes asks Gentiles to observe food laws and requires Jews to abandon them. There are two reasons for this. (1) Practically, the law is too important for Jews to abandon and too difficult for Gentiles to practise. In 1 Cor. 9:19-23, Paul summarizes his missionary tactics as τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα (v. 22). This indicates that Paul's accommodation is founded upon a missionary purpose. This is confirmed by Paul's repeated use of the term, κερδαίνω, which means to convert persons to Christianity by means of appropriate

missionary tactics: before Jews he acts as a Jew by himself practising the law and before Gentiles he acts as a Gentile by himself being free from the law. It is, therefore, fair to conclude that Paul's accommodation, his τοῖς πᾶσιν γέγονα πάντα, is a missionary tactic designed to win more converts.

(2) Theologically, Paul makes a distinction between faith in Christ and observance of the law and claims that observance of the law has nothing to do with salvation. What is important is, therefore, faith alone. In 1 Cor. 7:17-24, Paul contrasts circumcision with God's call. "God's call" is his call into participation in Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, leading to eschatological deliverance. Jesus' death has made circumcision and all other laws irrelevant. Consequently, both the changes from circumcision to uncircumcision and from uncircumcision to circumcision are unnecessary. If change does take place, however, that, too, does not matter, because neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any soteriological significance.

This is the reason why Paul can be so flexible in providing various tactics on the law in different situations. Paul makes a distinction between faith in Christ and observance of the law. Hence, he considers both observance and non-observance of the law as, each of them, practical responses of faith, which have nothing to do with salvation. Observing the law does not matter and being free from it does not matter. What does matter is God's saving action in Jesus' death. In other words, Paul classifies faith in Christ and observance of the law in different categories and maintains that faith is the only *condition* of becoming a member of God's people, while observance of the law corresponds to one particular life-style in *response* to faith.

## 5.2 THE MAIN RESULTS OF THIS THESIS AND FURTHER STUDIES

An attempt may now be made to answer, in reversed order, the questions raised in the introduction. The question was there posed, how, in the context of Jewish law, does Paul teach his congregations, both Jewish and Gentile respectively

and together, to respond to God's saving grace in Jesus' death and resurrection? The answer may be stated thus: Paul, in his epistles, teaches his congregations a "universal soteriology". Faith in Christ is the universal foundation for all. By faith, both Jews and Gentiles may become members of God's people. Based on this common foundation, various types of response, law-observing or non-observing, are allowed.

Paul maintains that God has accomplished his new, saving action in Jesus' death. Therefore, knowing, accepting and depending on what God has done are the essential conditions for receiving this gift and becoming members of God's people. Paul also teaches that in daily life each must respond to God's saving grace by choosing an appropriate life-style, based on his own cultural background. Jewish law, by definition, belongs to Jewish culture. Jewish Christians are, therefore, allowed to observe the law as their response to God's saving grace and as their expression of faith in Christ. On the other hand, Jewish law, by definition, does not belong to Gentile culture. Consequently, Gentile Christians may respond to God's saving grace apart from Jewish laws.

If Jewish Christians wish to abandon Jewish law, or Gentile Christians wish to observe it, they may do so, for neither observance, nor non-observance, of the law has anything to do with salvation. The conditions on which Paul consistently insists and on which he never compromises are: (1) that faith is the universal foundation for receiving salvation; (2) that no attempt may be made to force one's own conviction on others who differ from oneself and (3) that one should be free from whatever is contrary to faith, *e.g.*, idolatry.

A further question too was posed, how to respond to God's saving grace properly in order to obtain salvation in a culture that is neither Jewish nor Greek? And this question still remains unanswered. This is the question of faith and culture, of the contextual application of faith, a question which is raised by the present study, but which must here be regarded not as the subject of it, but as a sequel to it.

Nevertheless, there are two principles this thesis can contribute: (1) negatively, that one does not have to renounce one's own cultural background in order to become a Christian, if the cultural element does not violate faith; (2) positively, that one may express one's faith in Christ in terms of one's own culture. How to apply these theories in the practical field, however, needs further investigation. Further study should focus on developing the notion of what is merely a matter of culture and life-style and the notion of what violates faith. In other words, further investigation needs to determine how one is to discriminate between culture and faith, between what is essential for faith and what is not essential. This examination will be difficult, for there is no objective standard which can be used to measure what is in accordance with faith and what is not.

Nowadays, Taiwanese theologians are engaging in contextual theology. This is a movement which stems from the challenges of liberation theology in South America and "minjung" (sc. 'crowd') theology in Korea. The main task of contextual theology is to interpret faith by means of one's own experience and one's own culture, e.g., stories, legends, folk songs, etc.<sup>1</sup> This is in accordance with the positive principle stated above, namely, that of expressing faith by means of one's culture. This is somewhat different from the contextual application of biblical theology, for contextual theology takes the local culture as its basis, while the contextual application of biblical theology takes Jewish and early Christian literature as its basis and only then applies these to the present culture. It is, therefore, necessary to conduct a dialogue between these two methods in order to keep a balance between Christian faith and present culture.

The process of the contextual application of biblical theology, therefore, includes three steps. Biblical theology first asks what questions are raised and what answers are given in the biblical texts. The main task at this stage is to interpret the texts according to their *Sitz im Leben*. This stage obviously cannot be "contextualized" in the modern sense of the term, for the context here is the context of another place and another time. This is the main difference between



contextual theology and the contextual application of biblical theology. It is to be noted, however, that the Bible is not the only source of God's revelation. Revelation, in fact, exists everywhere and at every time. The Bible, to be sure, is the most important, but not the only source for understanding God's will. Accordingly, the Bible cannot tell us everything.

Second, there should be investigated those questions that arise today out of the present, local culture and daily life of the congregations. And here it should be noted that the questions which concern western theologians sometimes do not interest eastern congregations.

Finally, the original answers of the biblical texts to the questions raised by the biblical contexts should be applied to the questions raised at the second stage, and an answer to them sought, if an answer can be found. This stage is difficult. One possible method of applying the original message of the Bible to the present, local context is, first, to pay heed to the nature of God by adducing the evidence of the texts and, second, to deduce answers from the nature of God. For example, there is a question raised by the Taiwanese churches, whether, or not, worshipping ancestors has to be prohibited.

### *5.3 APPLICATION: WORSHIPPING ANCESTORS AND IDOLATRY*

#### *IN TAIWAN AS TEST CASES*

It has been more than one hundred and thirty years, since British and Canadian missionaries first came to Taiwan and began their mission. One of the difficulties which hindered their mission was "filial piety". As circumcision was important in Judaism, so was "filial piety" in Taiwanese society. The most difficult feature of "filial piety" is that by it people are bound to honour their ancestors by worshipping them. Missionaries consistently prohibited congregations from worshipping their ancestors, for this was regarded as idolatry. However, freedom from worshipping one's ancestors is very difficult for some church members even

today, because it is considered rebellious. This is very similar to violating circumcision in Judaism. As a result, many "God-fearers" are rejected by the church, because they cannot fulfil the requirement of freedom from worshipping ancestors. On the other hand, if they do not worship their ancestors, they may be isolated from their family, their friends and their society and this they can not afford to be.

If, today, St. Paul were sent as an apostle to Taiwan, the following dialogue might be expected.

"May I worship my ancestors, Very Right Rev. Moderator Paul?" someone asks, on a mid-summer night.

"Why not?" Paul answers.

"But, worshipping ancestors is considered idolatry and therefore we have been prohibited from doing so for a long time."

"Do you believe in Jesus as your saviour?"

"Aye!"

"How?"

"Well, as you know, I come to church from six o'clock to half-past six in the morning seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year for prayer services. I never miss any Sunday service and I offer more than one tenth every month. And ..."

"Goodness me! You are a pious man like my former supervisor, Dr. Gamaliel. But anything else?"

"Plenty! I attended the demonstration for protecting farmers last month. I am one of the supporters of the Child Prostitutes' Rescue Project. And much more, I love my wife. I never shout at my sons, who are as naughty as I was. I respect my mother. I treat my employees as my children. I never play dirty tricks in my business. And ..."

"Ah! That is enough. You are a good Christian."

"Thank you very much. But, what I am asking is about worshipping my ancestors."

"Well, I know. Let me ask *you* a question: When you worship your ancestors, do you really think that you are worshipping a god like *the GOD* in church?"

"Of course not. I clearly understand that I am honouring my ancestors by this form of worship. I know that this method is stupid, but, my father did it, my uncle does it and my neighbours do it. So, I have no other option. Last month when I refused to worship my dead father, my uncle shouted at me: 'You! A rebellious pig, I'll kill you!' For this reason, I have been a senior 'God-fearer' for more than fifty years."

"Oh gosh! 'There is nothing new under the sun.' I too was nearly kicked out, when I said that circumcision was nothing but mutilation and castration. Nevertheless, your words indicate that honouring your ancestors by worshipping them is part of your culture and that, when you are doing so, you clearly recognize that your ancestors are still your ancestors and not gods or ghosts. Therefore, the practice is not idolatry, but rather your culture. You certainly do not have to abandon your culture in order to become a Christian, if this culture does not violate faith. What is essential is faith in Christ. I am sure that you do have faith, for you have expressed your faith in your daily life. So, go and worship your ancestors in order to make your uncle happy. I hope that your uncle will be the next one who comes to me for baptism."

"Thank you very much for your kindness in relieving my burden instead of adding to it. If you can help me to solve one more question, I will come to you for baptism before my uncle."

"What?"

"In a mid-winter night, my son-in-law asked you the same question and you prohibited him from worshipping his granny."

"Did I? I don't remember that. Remind me of the case."

"Oh dear! How do I know what exactly happened? Emmmmmm, Ah, I think, he told you: 'I want to worship my granny, because my father did it, my auntie does it and ...'"

"But your neighbours don't do it', I said. Yes, I remember it now. Well, that is because of the different ..."

"Different weather?"

"No! No! Not really. It is because of the different situation. You know that your son-in-law stays in the city, which is hundreds of miles away from his relatives. Nobody asks him to worship his granny. Moreover, your lovely daughter hates it and calls it 'foolish superstition'. She, the treasurer, has warned me that if I cannot 'convert' her husband, she will cut back the budget for next year."

"Gosh! 'What has been done is what will be done'. Once, she and her mummy cut back my compact disc budget, when I visited and offered money to a temple in northern Taiwan with five gods."

"Oh goodness! How could you do that? That is idolatry!"

"But, what I offered was to Jesus who was one of the five gods. Does this count as idolatry?"

"Oh! This question is hard! Dr. Gamaliel might have taught me this. Well, let me think ... Ah! yes, can you describe what happened when you visited that temple."

"Aye, easy! When I visited that temple, the temple master told me: 'Our religion is better than yours, because we are able to accept more gods, including your Jesus, and treat them as equals. In fact, we treat Jesus even better than the other gods. For example, we know that Jesus came from the west, so every Friday we let him take his turn to be the 'king' of the five gods by playing Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5, the 'Emperor'."

"Oh! I like this one."

"So you don't think that it is idolatry after all."

"No! No! I'm not talking about this. What I mean is that I like Beethoven's 'Emperor', not that temple practice. On the contrary, I think that your daughter was right, when she cut back your budget, because you visited and made offerings in that temple."

"Do you mean that you consider it to be idolatry?"

"Absolutely yes! Because that temple master regards Jesus as only one of their gods. But our GOD does not like it. In the Old Testament, Yahweh punished Israel, because they put Baal beside him and worshipped both. Therefore, don't go to that temple any more. And please help me to 'convert' your son-in-law. I hope that your daughter will not cut back the budget for next year."

## NOTE

[1]. E.g., Song suggests ten positions of doing the contextual theology as follows:

"1. The totality of life is the raw material of theology. Theology deals with concrete issues that affect life in its totality and not just with abstract concepts that engage theological brains. No human problem is too humble or too insignificant for theology. Theology has to wrestle with the earth, not with heaven.

2. The frontiers of our theology must move from the history of Israel and the history of Christianity in the West to the history in which we are involved in Asia. With this expansion of our historical horizon, we gain broader and deeper insight into the mystery of God's ways with the nations.

3. The decisive factor in the theology of history, from the Christian point of view, is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, as the Word become flesh, is the theological center that guides our theological reflection and action in Asian settings. For in Jesus Christ, God engaged in *theo*-logical action with humanity.

4. There is no such thing as a theology immune from cultural and historical influences. Theology is culturally and historically not neutral. A neutral theology is a homeless theology. It does not belong anywhere. Theology really begins in earnest when it identifies its home and discovers its belonging.

5. Strictly speaking, the church does not have its own mission. There is only one mission: the mission of God. The church exists to serve God's mission. The task of Third World theology is to help the traditional churches enlarge their vision of God's mission.

6. The task of Christian theology vis-à-vis cultures, histories, and religions alien to traditional theological categories is not to give 'Christian' answers to 'non-Christian' questions. Nor is it its duty to turn 'non-Christian' questions into 'Christian' answers. Here Christian theology must be open-ended, for God is an open-ended God.

7. God's salvation can no longer be explained in terms of a history moving forward along a straight line. To explain God's salvation in this way is to explain it away. God moves in all directions: God moves forward, no doubt, but also sideways and even backwards. Perhaps God zigzags too. It does not seem God's interest to create neat and tidy landscapes in certain selected places. God goes anywhere a redeeming presence is called for - in Asia, in Africa, as well as in Israel and in the West.

8. Theology is to serve the future as if it were the present. The future that remains strictly future has no use for the present conditions of humanity, especially for those who suffer poverty, oppression, and degradation. God is the God of the future because God is the God of the present. That is why we celebrate Christ's presence at the eucharist. In Christ, the divine future becomes the human present.

9. Ecumenical theology is an expression of the great enrichment that can come only from the diverse ways in which faith is understood and applied in particular cultural and socio-political situations. Ecumenical theology cannot be a synthesis or compilation of particular theologies; it is contained within particular theologies.

10. Ecumenical theology has a wider connotation for those of us in Asian cultural and religious contexts. It is the Asian *oikoumene*, the broader inhabited world of Asia with its histories, cultures, and religions,



that is the subject of our theological concern. Ecumenical theology within Christian communities presupposes ecumenical theology in this wider sense" (Song 1984: 6-21, his italics).

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